

FIGHTING HYBRID

The Coming of Hybrid Warfare & The Threats To Pakistan

Mian Nadir Sulaiman



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by
Mian Nadir Sulaiman

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Dedication

Dedicated to the people of Pakistan, whose courage and resilience have enabled them to withstand the hybrid onslaught against all odds.

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List of Abbreviations And Acronyms

- 1 1GW, 2GW, 3GW, 4GW, 5GW - First generation of warfare, the second generation of warfare, third generation of warfare, fourth generation of warfare, fifth generation of warfare
- 2 BIMSTEC - Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
- 3 BRI - Belt and Road Initiative
- 4 CCP - Chinese Communist Party
- 5 CoE - Centre of Excellence
- 6 CPEC - China Pakistan Economic Corridor
- 7 EU - European Union
- 8 GPS - Global Positioning System
- 9 ICJ - International Court of Justice
- 10 IO - Information operations
- 11 IRO - Information-related capabilities
- 12 IW - Informational warfare
- 13 JCPOA - Joint Comprehensive Plan for Action
- 14 Lt Col - Lieutenant Colonel
- 15 LEAs - Law enforcement agencies

- 16 NATO - North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- 17 NSA - National Security Agency
- 18 OODA - Observe, orientate, decide, act
- 19 PLA - People's Liberation Army
- 20 RAW - Research and Analysis Wing
- 21 SAARC - South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
- 22 UK - United Kingdom
- 23 UNCLOS - United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea
- 24 US, USA, USAF - United States, United States of America, United States Air Force
- 25 USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republic
- 26 WHO - World Health Organization

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“The art of war is of vital importance to the State. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected.”

Sun Tzu

Preface

IT IS VITAL FOR the political hierarchy, national security experts, intelligentsia, and civil society to correctly understand the threats and challenges surrounding their country so that these may be addressed with precise and timely responses. Failing this, a country's national security will always remain under duress and in a dog-eat-dog world, will most certainly lead to disastrous consequences, as witnessed in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Libya, to quote a few examples from the recent past. Arguably, all these countries failed to correctly appreciate the threats they were facing and were unable to respond appropriately.

Pakistan's humble beginnings, its persistent conflict with an adversary five times its size, the consequent dismemberment in 1971, presence of an irredentist western neighbor, a long-drawn war on terror, foreign-sponsored sub-nationalistic drives, internal political instability, an ever-wavering economy and effects of the ongoing geopolitical contestation have constantly kept the national security apparatus under pressure. While Indo-Pak's overt nuclearization in 1998 has largely reduced the chances of a conventional war, it has also encouraged the adversaries to explore new avenues for continuing their age-old conflict and competition. Thus, a new genre of hybrid war has crept into South Asian warfare.

This book is an attempt to understand this new phenomenon, what are its features and components, how different countries are employing it, how is it being used against Pakistan and how should Pakistan respond to, and tackle this hydra. In the first chapter, I have covered the theoretical aspects of warfare, touching upon its place in the human experience, its evolution, and its conceptual underpinnings. The 'five-generation warfare model' has been briefly explained and its critique has also been added. In the second chapter, I have delved into the coming of hybrid warfare and how international powers reflect on and employ the same. Countries discussed herein include the USA, China, European Union, Israel, and India. Hybrid warfare has then been dissected and its full spectrum explained

including how hybrid warfare plays out in the diplomatic, economic, informational, cyber, social, lawfare, and kinetic domains. I have also touched upon other contemporary concepts of warfare including irregular warfare, grey zone conflict, non-linear warfare, unrestricted warfare, political warfare, and compound warfare, and how hybrid warfare differs from them. The third chapter encompasses case studies ranging from Russia's war in Georgia to the Saudi-Iran conflict leading to certain conclusions therefrom. The fourth chapter covers in detail the hybrid war launched against Pakistan. It begins with explaining the geopolitical context of the hybrid onslaught, eventually delving into various components of the hybrid war employed against Pakistan. In the final chapter, I have ventured to put forward certain recommendations for the political hierarchy, national security experts, and civil society, with a view to enable the country to put up a potent and articulated response.

This research has left a lasting impression on me. Foremost, it has awoken me to the harsh realities of geopolitical power struggles, the realpolitik that ensues in its wake, and the stupendous price a country may have to pay for its miscalculations, judgmental errors, complacency, or slumber. Secondly, it has amplified my appreciation of the Pakistani nation, its leadership, and security forces who have successfully managed to wade the country through terribly rough waters with minimal resources. Thirdly, it has made me more hopeful of the country's future, as I conclude that the worst is already behind us and the country is moving forward on the right track. This book will help the novice reader in understanding the decisions Pakistan makes and why. It may also help the advanced reader to build on it and project into the future.

For this humble endeavor, I am thankful to Colonel (Retd) Dr. Ghulam Qamber of the National Defense University, who encouraged me to select 'Hybrid Warfare' as the topic for my MPhil thesis at NDU. Of course, all this would not have been possible without the love and support of my parents, siblings, my wife, and children to whom I will always remain indebted.

Nadir
Islamabad
2022

Abstract

AS WARFARE PASSES through its fifth generation of evolution, the coming of Hybrid Warfare marks a major mutation of its journey. While few historians have argued that the hybrid way of fighting can be traced as far back as the Peloponnesian war, most concede that the hybrid concept is more relevant to the modern, post-cold war era, where the proliferation of nuclear weapons has discouraged physical engagements, while coming of the internet and smartphones has provided protagonists with other means of competition and conflict for furthering their national interests. As geopolitical biases gravitate eastwards and international realignments deepen roots, Pakistan finds itself at the epicentre of the power struggle between the geopolitical poles. Its archrival has also swooped in to take advantage of any opportunity afforded herein. Together, Pakistan's protagonists have subjected the country to a plethora of hybrid onslaughts, cutting through all possible domains of the human experience; diplomatic, economic, military, informational, legal and social, etc. It, therefore, entails that the responsibility of fighting a hybrid onslaught is not to be relegated to the military prong alone. Instead, a whole-of-the-nation approach has to be adopted to safeguard national security, which will include such measures as honing intelligence capabilities, developing and employing diplomatic muscle, nurturing a more robust economy, educating the nation about the hybrid threat, diversifying the media's portfolio, leveraging international legal frameworks, establishing Hybrid Warfare Centers of Excellence, eliminating terrorism and sub-nationalistic sentiments and maintaining a credible deterrent, to name a few.

Introduction

“The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish by that test the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature.”¹

Carl Von Clausewitz

WAR BELONGS TO THE social province and is thus a permanent feature of human existence. Like other aspects of social life, warfare has also evolved from its early and simplistic form of one-on-one duels to a highly specialised, precise, and somewhat surgical craft. Political and military leaders have endeavoured throughout history to understand the nature of the war at hand so that they could articulate an effective and result-oriented response. Many have tried to foresee and project into the future to fathom what lies ahead, with varying degrees of success. The Clausewitzian school professes that while the nature of war remains unchanged i.e., it remains violent, interactive, and political, its character² may change with evolution in social values, laws, technology, etc.

Difference of opinion exists regarding the generations of warfare. Some trace these back to the ancient times, while others take the Westphalian Treaty and the coming of the nation-state as the starting point. The largely acceptable convention is that over time, warfare has evolved through five generations, which have been somewhat overlapping yet distinct. As per Lind’s³ model, first-generation warfare refers to the times of Napoleonic wars which witnessed the tactics of

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- 1 Howard, M. and Paret, P. (1989). *On War* by Carl Von Clausewitz. 1st ed. Princeton University Press, pp.88-89.
 - 2 Giegerich, Bastian. 2016. “Hybrid Warfare and The Changing Character of Conflict”. *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 15 (2): 65-72. doi:10.11610/connections.15.2.05.
 - 3 Lind, W., Nightingale, K., Schmitt, J. and Sutton, J., 1989. *The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation*. [online] LIND. Available at: <<https://globalguerrillas.typepad.com/lind/the-changing-face-of-war-into-the-fourth-generation.html>> [Accessed 13 May 2021].

lines and columns and smoothbore muskets, the second-generation warfare was ushered in with the arrival of rifled muskets, breech-loading guns, machine guns, and indirect fire as witnessed during the First World War, the third generation of warfare saw large-scale manoeuvres by large-sized field formations as witnessed in the Second World War and the fourth generation of warfare encompassed the guerrilla warfare, where wars were fought between state and non-state actors.

Today, warfare is undergoing yet another morphosis molding the art into its fifth generation, where assorted threats demand securitization of almost every walk of life within nation-states. The range of threats in this new phenomenon called the '*Hybrid War*' is spread over both kinetic and non-kinetic domains, and as always, these threats aim at forcing the opponent to yield to one's own will. Lines are now blurred between war and peace and civilians and combatants, as each opponent applies his entire wherewithal to overpower the other. While the spectrum of hybrid war may start from seemingly benign threats, it possesses the potential of turning kinetic as soon as the enemy has been significantly mellowed and success is assured. In essence, hybrid warfare entails the combined use of all hard and soft power tools available to a state, which may even include the state-sponsored use of non-state actors.

Changing character of war merits changes in response as well. In case the nature of prevailing warfare is not timely and correctly understood, it is possible that despite possessing sizeable and potent armed forces, the military machine of a country may become irrelevant to the problem at hand, eventually failing at its prime task of safeguarding national security. A look at the Vietnam war leads one to conclude that despite possessing overwhelming military might the USA was unable to garner quantifiable success on the battlefield, primarily because it did not correctly decipher and internalize the nature of guerilla warfare till the very end, or at least till very late. USSR suffered a similar fate in Afghanistan where a gigantic Red Army could not subdue a ragtag militia. The same mistakes were repeated during the war on terror where despite overwhelming US military might, no logical end to the Afghan war remained in sight, arguably because the US was pursuing an incorrect strategy against

the Taliban. The same holds true for Pakistan. It has to correctly dissect the challenges it faces, to mount a proper response.

Military academicians have argued that while the term “hybrid” is new, the concept thereof has been around for some time. Some commentators trace its use back to the *Peloponnesian war*⁴ of the 5th Century B.C. when the Athenians encouraged the Helots to carry out an insurgency against the Spartans and forced the Spartans to fight a two-front war. Unable to fight on both the internal and external fronts, Spartans succumbed to offering terms of peace. A form of hybrid warfare was also used by Britain during the Second World War when it established the ‘*Special Operations Executive*’⁵ to ‘*set Europe ablaze*’ by encouraging resistance movements to hold back the German reinforcements, while Britain itself applied the direct strategy⁶. Other examples include the Indo-Pak war (1971) and the more recent Russia’s war in Crimea (2014).

An apt definition of modern-day Hybrid warfare is that “*Hybrid threats combine military and non-military as well as covert and overt means, including disinformation, cyber-attacks, economic pressure, deployment of irregular armed groups and use of regular forces. Hybrid methods are used to blur the lines between war and peace, and attempt to sow doubt in the minds of targets.*”⁷ In practical application, the Russian concept of “nonlinear conflict” exemplifies a hybrid warfare strategy.⁸

While Hybrid warfare is a relatively new concept, there is no dearth of literature available on the subject. Most of the literature available however has been written by western authors, think-tanks and state institutions, who conceive Russia as the prime driver of hybrid campaigns. American writings point towards both Russia and China as the main users of hybrid strategies while in the Asian

4 Murray, Williamson, and Peter R Mansoor. 2012. *Hybrid Warfare*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

5 Morris, Nigel. 2020. “BBC - History - World Wars: The Special Operations Executive 1940 - 1946”. *Bbc.Co.Uk*. http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/soe_01.shtml.

6 Murray, Williamson, and Peter R Mansoor. 2012. *Hybrid Warfare*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

7 “NATO’s Response to Hybrid Threats”. 2018. *NATO*. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_156338.htm?selectedLocale=en.

8 Stowell, Joshua. 2018. “What Is Hybrid Warfare? Non-Linear Combat in the 21st Century”. *Global Security Review*. <https://globalsecurityreview.com/hybrid-and-non-linear-warfare-systematically-erases-the-divide-between-war-peace/>.

context, most writings revolve around India and Pakistan, more being about the former.

Andrew Korybko (2015)⁹ has given a perspective on how the ongoing geopolitical morphosis from unipolarity to multipolarity has encouraged the US in adopting an unconventional warfighting approach against its perceived adversaries, most notably Russia and China. He has identified two basic components of US hybrid wars aimed at *Regime change* namely *Color revolutions* and *Unconventional wars*. He has also theorized that the US is more prone to adopting hybrid measures in areas closer to its core adversaries while adopting a more conventional approach in areas farther from them. For example, the US will apply a more direct method of regime change in Libya being distant from Russia, while it will apply an indirect or hybrid method of regime change in Ukraine which lies much closer to Russia. Korybko has provided an elaborate theoretical context for his explanation of US hybrid wars taking into account *Mahan's* works on the *Influence of Sea power on History*, *Mackinder's* ideas of ruling the world through gaining control of the *heartland* and *world-island*, *Pilsudski's* idea of *strategic destabilization of the periphery to fracture the Russian state*, *Spykman's* theory of global domination through control of the *Rimland*, *Saul Cohen's Shatter belt theory*, *Brzezinski's Eurasian Balkan theory*, *Lind's* works on *4th Generation Warfare*, *Colonel John Warden's* works on the *Five rings strategic concept*, *John Boyd's OODA loop*, *Steve Mann's Chaos theory* and *US's leading from behind theory*. He further explains that hybrid wars are a major component of the US strategy of *Full Spectrum Dominance*.

Andrew Korybko (2017)¹⁰ has also analyzed the prevailing geopolitical contestation between the sole superpower USA, resurgent Russia, and rising China and its implications for Pakistan. Korybko argues that the US led the *Euromaidan* in Ukraine from behind to disrupt Russian plans of developing transnational infrastructure projects, which was Russia's bid to enhance its geopolitical position.

9 Korybko, Andrew. 2015. *Hybrid Wars: The Indirect Adaptive Approach to Regime Change*. 1st ed. Moscow: Peoples' Friendship University of Russia.

10 Korybko, A. (2019). Applicability of Hybrid Warfare to Pakistan: Challenges and Possible Responses. *NDU Journal* 2017, [online] (31), pp.207-228. Available at: https://www.ndu.edu.pk/issra/issra_pub/articles/ndu-journal/NDU-Journal-2017/12-Applicability-of-Hybrid-Warfare-to-Pakistan.pdf [Accessed 4 Jun. 2019].

America adopted a similar approach toward China. China's requirement to maintain steady growth to ensure internal harmony coupled with the potential choking effects of the South China Sea and the Malacca Straits have forced it to look westwards inland, giving birth to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). CPEC being the flagship of BRI is being viewed as the harbinger of China's rise to an elevated geopolitical stature, something which the US is not yet prepared to accept. It seems likely that this geopolitical contest, once coupled with other factors such as Indian adversarial designs, Pakistan's significance as the *Zipper of Eurasia*, its location at the *convergence of civilizations* and its importance as the center of the *Indo-Pacific century*, will lead to Pakistan becoming the world's top Hybrid warfare battleground. Pakistan will thus remain subjected to external meddling aimed at keeping the country on the brink, possibly by provoking sub-nationalistic identity conflicts in areas where CPEC is expected to pass through, such as Gilgit-Baltistan and Balochistan. Hybrid War in Pakistan may eventually boil down to the state's defensive efforts to cultivate a sense of inclusive patriotism, while its adversaries will keep inventing enticing narratives which encourage identity separateness and offensive physical action against the state. Devising appropriate counter-narratives, promoting inclusive patriotism through education, public rallies, or media's positive reinforcement of national narrative, educating the citizenry against hybrid warfare, avoiding over-reaction to situations, and a trusted and well-functioning partnership between civil society and the government within a flourishing democracy are the most effective means of fighting hybrid warfare.

Cantwell (2017)¹¹ has reflected on the legal aspects of Hybrid warfare. He argues that states devise and resort to hybrid means to stay short of overt violations of the UN Charter. Hybrid means are used to create deliberate doubts thereby attribution to, and seeking legal relief against the culprit states is blurred for avoiding blame and international retribution. He stresses the deciphering of hybrid campaigns that amount to aggression or coercive interference and recommends legislating accordingly.

11 Cantwell, Douglas. 2017. "Welcome to ASIL | ASIL". *Asil.Org*. <https://www.asil.org/insights/volume/21/issue/14/hybrid-warfare-aggression-and-coercion-gray-zone>.

In its *Conference Report on Compound (Hybrid & Gray Zone) threats to Pakistan* (2018)¹², the *Centre for Global & Strategic Studies Islamabad* has concluded that the National Security Policy must identify and define Hybrid Warfare & Gray Zone Conflict. It has recommended a holistic and well-integrated national response predicated on a whole-of-the-government and whole-of-the-societal components approach, fully backed by the law enforcement and intelligence agencies. It sums up the contours of Pakistan's national strategy in the acronym *Secure-PAK*, where *secure* implies the *securing of constitutional, ideological, informational, and institutional domains while P* stands for *preventing hostile actors from manipulating the masses*, *A* stands for *averting fissures in the people-state relationship by taking measures against strategic compellence and coercion* and *K* stands for *kinetic response against any external misadventure*.

Neha Kohli (2018)¹³ gives a good insight into the Indian thought process and its approach toward hybrid warfare when she concludes the works of several Indian experts on the subject. She points out that fighting hybrid wars necessitates changes in doctrinal and conceptual aspects of warfighting. Military strategies and capacity enhancement of the armed forces must flow from the same. Transformation must not be restricted to technological developments alone but must encompass political and socio-economic aspects of the conflict also. Strategies must be aimed at *long-term conflict management* rather than *warfighting* alone.

Dr Frank G. Hoffmann (2018)¹⁴ has given an incisive analysis of Russian and Chinese hybrid threats as they are perceived by the US in its *National Defense Strategy* and has then recommended steps for countering them. Russia's alleged meddling in US elections, its use of *social bots* to sway public opinion on social media platforms, combined employment of regular forces, separatist forces in Donetsk and Luhansk, complimentary use of drones, political repression, use

12 Center for Global & Strategic Studies (2018). *Compound (Hybrid and Gray Zone) Threats to Pakistan*. Conference Report. [online]. Available at: <https://cgss.com.pk/publication/Publications/pdf/Compound-Hybrid-Gray-Threats-to-Pakistan.pdf> [Accessed 7 Jun. 2019].

13 Deshpande, Vikrant. 2018. *Hybrid Warfare: The Changing Character of Conflict*. 1st ed. New Delhi: Pentagon Press.

14 Hoffman, Frank G. 2018. "Examining Complex Forms of Conflict: Gray Zone and Hybrid Challenges". *Prism* 7 (4): 30-47. <https://cco.ndu.edu/News/Article/1680696/examining-complex-forms-of-conflict-gray-zone-and-hybrid-challenges/>.

of organized crime, terrorism, influence over food supplies to control the population and the “accidental” downing of MH-17 killing all 217 passengers indicate how Russian warfighting is evolving in the hybrid realm. On the other hand, Chinese thoughts on future wars being *non-contact* (*Fei jierong*), *non-linear* (*fei zhinshi*) and *non-symmetric* (*Fei duicheng*) depict its approach to hybridity. Hoffman suggests that the US national security community needs to shift its focus from conventional *big wars* and prepare itself for the complete array of hybrid threats it is expected to face in the future. This has to begin with a greater understanding of military history and warfighting and establishing a broader framework for addressing conflict, incorporating a wider range of tools than the traditional set. Instead of over-analyzing violence alone, more attention must be paid to addressing the political dynamics of the conflict. Structural issues are to be addressed once the threat has been correctly assessed including the identification of correct authorities which must spearhead the response to the hybrid onslaught. Countering hybrid threats will also require partnerships both across government departments and with international players and organizations.

Caliskan (2019)¹⁵ has criticized the idea of Hybrid warfare and argues that Hybrid warfare does not merit adoption as a doctrinal concept. He suggests that there is only one type of war, with some more or less active warfare. He asserts that hybrid warfare is not a new concept as even the Second World War is replete with examples of hybrid campaigns where regular and irregular forces worked in unison for the same objective. Caliskan describes hybrid as a weak concept with an ambiguous definition which creates an unnecessary category and deals with tactical and operational levels of warfare, missing out on the strategic level. He further argues that all challenges are to be approached first as political challenges and then appropriate well-tailored responses are to be mounted against them.

Hybrid being a somewhat new term, has yet to be completely absorbed into academic and military discourses. Both academicians and military strategists are still grappling with correctly defining the hybrid and its constituents. Does hybrid warfare include conventional kinetic

15 Beyond the Horizon. 2019. “Hybrid Warfare and Strategic Theory”. Beyond the Horizon. <https://www.behorizon.org/hybrid-warfare-through-the-lens-of-strategic-theory/>.

application of large-scale armed forces or does it fall short of it? Who is required to respond to hybrid? The Armed forces only, or the whole government? What are the constituents of its response? What kind of a hybrid onslaught is being faced by Pakistan? What is it aimed at? What are the constituents of the threat? How should Pakistan respond to the hybrid onslaught? In which domains should it respond to the enemy? How and why did warfare evolve into its present hybrid state? What is hybrid? A larger spectrum of threats, a conflict, or a form of warfare? How have nations responded to hybrid in the past? Can the existing force structure respond to hybrid or are some changes/modifications required in the force structure? What is the role of other departments in responding to hybrid? These are a few of the questions that defense experts are currently faced with. The larger consensus is that since the threats are hybrid, therefore the response also needs to be hybrid, thus meriting a '*whole of the nation*' approach. Such an approach however has its flip side since it remains prone to over-securitisation of all walks of life, potentially transforming welfare states into security states. Gaps of knowledge thus exist in comprehension of hybrid warfare and carving out a befitting response while staying short of complete securitization of lifestyle.

Pakistan is presently facing a hybrid onslaught. A myriad of diplomatic and economic coercion, internal destabilization, terrorism, cyber warfare, and information operations has been unleashed onto it, wherein the actors and the battle spaces are unrestricted. Addressing such a complex phenomenon merits precise dissection of the problem for reaching its core and identifying its elements correctly so that it can be responded to, aptly and timely.

The research work in the ensuing pages has remained within the domain of the theory of realism. While a *universal* approach has been adopted in the initial part of the research to understand the global approach to hybrid warfare, a more *specific* and *regional* approach has been adopted thereafter, zooming onto the hybrid threats to Pakistan. Overall, the research has an *analytical*, *applied*, and *conceptual* orientation. A *qualitative approach* and a *deductive process* have been followed. Research methods include *analysis of historical records*, *analysis of documents*, and *case studies*. Techniques applied include

recording of notes, content analysis, tape and film listening & analysis, and statistical compilations.

This study is expected to help policymakers and national security experts in understanding the character of modern warfare and the means being applied by the adversary. The intent and purpose of the effort are to enable them to respond more aptly to the threats right now and in the future.

Chapter 1

War – Evolution & Conceptual Underpinnings

Section I: Why War? The Place of War in the Human Experience

DESPITE CAUSING IMMENSE suffering and destruction, *war* continues to remain a regular and permanent feature of the human condition. While the *nature of war* continues to remain the same i.e., violent, interactive, and political, the *character of war* continues to morph in line with the ever-evolving geopolitics and technological developments. Politicians and military experts have tried to find a way of settling issues without resorting to war, and have even proceeded to outlaw war, however, limited success has been achieved if any on this account. One such attempt to outlaw war was the *Kellogg-Briand Pact*¹ (1928) signed in the inter-war period by 62 countries including the USA, UK, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan. The signatories agreed to outlaw war as an instrument of state policy and called upon all to settle their disputes by peaceful means, however, the Japanese invasion of Manchuria (1931) only three years later, reduced its value to nothing more than an idealistic dream. The anthropologist *Margaret Mead* (1940)² argued that warfare was neither a biological nor a social inevitability; instead, she reflected on it as a social invention that could one day be repealed once people recognized the defects of the existing invention and devised a better social invention to deal with their issues. *Sun Tzu* (544-496 B.C.) in the *Art of War* has explained war as an extension of politics³ and has laid immense emphasis on developing its correct understanding and that of warfighting strategies. *Kautilya* (350-275 B.C.) in his *Arthashastra*

1 “Milestones: 1921–1936 - Office of The Historian”. 2020. *History.State.Gov*. Accessed August 2. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/kellogg>.

2 Mead, M., 1940. Warfare is only an invention - not a biological necessity. *Asia*, [online] Available at: <<http://users.metu.edu.tr/utuba/Mead.pdf>> [Accessed 12 June 2021].

3 Mark, Joshua J. 2020. “Sun-Tzu”. *Ancient History Encyclopedia*.

encourages war for preserving the power of the state⁴. He further introduces three types of wars i.e., *open war* (fought between states), *concealed war* (guerilla war), and *silent war*. His idea of the silent war can be considered a precursor to the modern-day hybrid war and includes continuous fighting, assassinations, employment of secret agents, sowing discord amongst the enemy, use of women as weapons of war, use of religion and superstition, and spread of propaganda and disinformation⁵.

Machiavelli (1469-1527) in his *The Prince* advocates that the prime duty of a prince is to gain and maintain power through waging war⁶, and in his *Art of War* he advocates that war is to be used for political ends⁷. *Clausewitz* (1780-1831) in his book *Vom Kriege* (*On War*) describes war as a political instrument used for the continuation of policy by other means, an act of violence used to compel the opponent to fulfil our will⁸.

An exchange of letters between *Albert Einstein* (1879-1955)⁹ and *Sigmund Freud* (1856-1939)¹⁰ later published under the title *Why War?* also attempts to decipher the place of warfare in the human journey. Einstein asks Freud's opinion on finding a way of delivering mankind from the menace of war. In response, Freud points out the paradox that it is war itself in the first place that creates conditions for lasting peace. He further explains that war can be expunged from the human experience through shared identities, a sense of community, human cultural development, a well-founded dread of the form of future wars, and the creation of a centralized body that can resolve disputes and possesses the adequate force to enforce its decisions.

4 "Kautilya's Arthashastra and War". 2019. *Ukdiss.com*. <https://ukdiss.com/examples/kautilya-arthashastra-and-war.php>.

5 Boesche, Roger. 2020. "Kautilya's Arthashastra on War and Diplomacy in Ancient India". *The Journal of Military History* 67 (1). doi:<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/40432>.

6 "The Prince Quotes: War | SparkNotes". 2020. *Sparknotes.com*. Accessed August 2. <https://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/prince/quotes/theme/war/>.

7 Amoroso, Alexander. 2016. "War and Politics in The Thought of Machiavelli". *Armstrong Undergraduate Journal of History* 6 (2). doi:10.20429/aujh.2016.060206.

8 Clausewitz, Carl Von. 1989. *On War*. 1st ed. Princeton University Press.

9 "Why War? A Letter from Albert Einstein to Sigmund Freud". 2020. UNESCO. Accessed August 2. <https://en.unesco.org/courier/may-1985/why-war-letter-albert-einstein-sigmund-freud>.

10 "Why War? A Letter from Freud to Einstein". 2020. UNESCO. Accessed August 2. <https://en.unesco.org/courier/marzo-1993/why-war-letter-freud-einstein>.

None of these philosophical yet workable solutions have materialized to date and mankind remains plagued with war.

J.F.C. Fuller in *The Conduct of War (1789-1961)* also argues that war is a continuation of policy and that the ultimate aim of war is peace. Thus, nations must do maximum good to each other in peacetime and minimum harm in wartime so that the means do not cancel out the end.

In the *Islamic concept of war*¹¹, war is to be undertaken as a last resort for self-defense and has to be fought under a set of rules which lays down specific amenities for women, children, elderly and war prisoners, minimum use of force, and must be stopped as soon as initial causes are addressed. The unjust killing of one man has been equated with the killing of entire mankind.

Thus, the larger consensus on war is that it is the continuation of policy by other means. To the realist, it is a permanent part of the human experience and is thus here to stay.

Section II: Competition, Conflict & War

Statesmen and the public at large all need to understand these terms to comprehend where their country stands and where it is headed. The US Joint Doctrine¹² reflects on the *competition continuum* as comprising *cooperation*, *competition below armed conflict*, and *armed conflict*, all of which can exist simultaneously and are not necessarily sequenced. Nick Bosio¹³ has reflected on *competition*, *conflict*, and *war* as parts of a spectrum of *political coercion* and *persuasion*.



Figure 1: Competition Continuum¹⁴

11 “Religions - Islam: War.” BBC. *BBC*, August 13, 2009. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/islamethics/war.shtml#:~:text=Islam>

12 Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2019. *Competition Continuum Joint Doctrine Note 1- 19*.

13 Bosio, Nick. 2020. *Australian Army Research Centre*. <https://researchcentre.army.gov.au/library/land-power-forum/what-war-defining-war-conflict-and-competition>.

14 Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2019. *Competition Continuum Joint Doctrine Note 1- 19*.

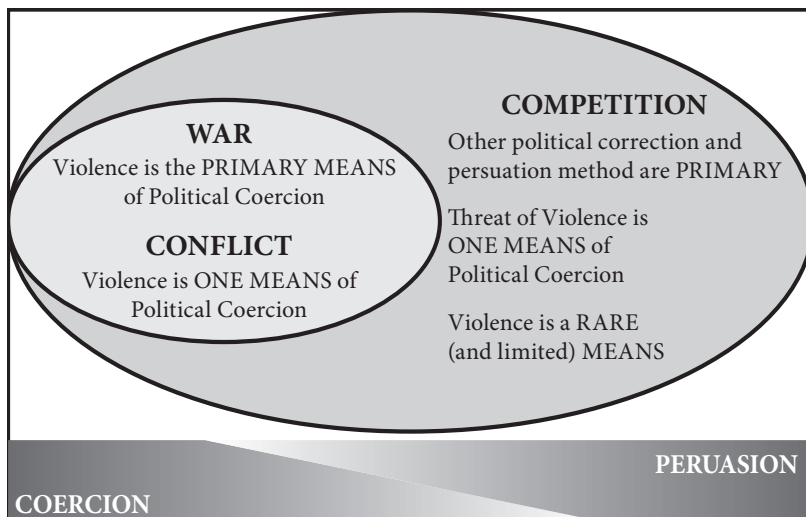


Figure 2: Coercion - Persuasion Spectrum¹⁵

Conflict is explained in the dictionary as a “competitive or opposing action of incompatibles, antagonistic state or action (as of divergent ideas, interests, or persons); mental struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands; to be different, opposed, or contradictory; to fail to be in agreement or accord”.¹⁶ Another definition of conflict is that it is “an active disagreement between people with opposing opinions or principles; fighting between two or more groups of people or countries”.¹⁷ Briefly, conflict is a clash of interests between two sides. In the military context, *conflict* is the larger construct at play. Conflicts are classified as high, medium, and low-intensity conflicts, based primarily on their level of violence or the size of participating forces. “*Conflict management*” and “*conflict resolution*” are applied to address conflicts, however where mutually acceptable solutions remain unachievable, conflict may escalate into war, wherein the belligerents attempt to address the issue by force.

¹⁵ Bosio, Nick. 2020. *Australian Army Research Centre*. <https://researchcentre.army.gov.au/library/land-power-forum/what-war-defining-war-conflict-and-competition>.

¹⁶ “Conflict”. 2019. *Meriam-Webster*. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conflict>.

¹⁷ 2019. *Cambridge Dictionary*. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/conflict>.

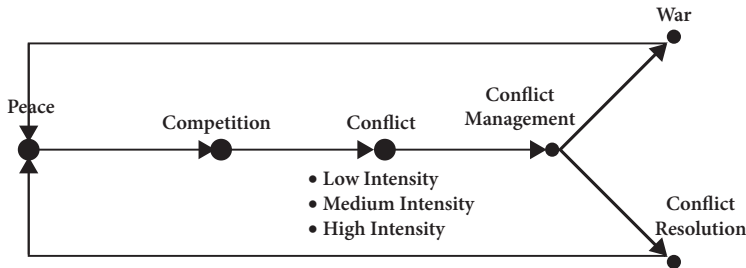


Figure 3: War - Peace Continuum

Section III: Evolution of Warfare – The 5 Generations of War

Human history has continuously oscillated between cycles of peace, conflict, and war. With the evolution of human society and advancements in technology, warfare has also continued to evolve. To make sense of it all, experts have tried to identify the major mutations that have occurred over time in warfare, and have then defined the distinct ensuing periods as generations of warfare. Some experts have delved into pre-modern times, while others have restricted themselves to the more modern era of nation-states only. The most common of these generational models was first defined in 1989, in an article co-authored for the Marine Corps Gazette¹⁸, wherein the authors delineated four generations of warfare, starting from the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 whereafter the state was legally authorized monopoly over violence. With time, the fifth generation of warfare has also come to the fore and has been added by subsequent experts. Needless to say, a detailed study of history is essential to project into the future of warfare.

1st Generation of Warfare¹⁹

Contemporary military history identifies the *Treaty of Westphalia* (1648) as the start point of the 1st generation of warfare, as nation-states established their monopoly over the use of force, and an era of warfighting between standing state armies was initiated. Warfare before

¹⁸ Lind, William S., Col Keith Nightingale, Capt. John F. Schmitt, Col Joseph W. Sutton, and Lt Col Gary I. Wilson. 1989. "The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation". *Marine Corps Gazette*, 1989.

¹⁹ Lind, William. 2003. "The Four Generations of Modern War". *Counterpunch.Org*. <https://www.counterpunch.org/2003/04/21/the-four-generations-of-modern-war/>.

this era was conducted more between families, tribes, religions, business interests, etc. The character of the first generation of warfare was defined by *linear fighting, high standards of military order, fighting in lines and columns, rigid drills, and use of the front-loaded smoothbore muskets*. No formal art of war was applied in this era. Examples include the Napoleonic Wars, the American civil war, and the English civil war.

2nd Generation of Warfare²⁰

The setting in of mechanical and technological advancements in weaponry such as the advent of rifled guns, machine guns, and indirect fire brought about the second generation of warfare, wherein *tight-knit battlefield formations* were abandoned in favor of *tactical fire and movement*, which the world witnessed during WW-1. Attrition of enemy forces remained the main objective. The defensive form of war manifested itself through trench warfare. The French maxim of “*Artillery conquers, infantry occupies*” gained ground. *Obedience* became more important than *initiative* as warfare took the form of a well-coordinated orchestra. *Operational art* was formally introduced by the Prussian Army during this period. Examples include World War-I and the Boer War.

3rd Generation of Warfare²¹

The stalemate of trench warfare and the resultant losses of morale and resources in the First World War forced military strategists to look for out-of-the-box solutions for their predicament. Germans found the answer in *Blitzkrieg* maneuvers, thus formally introducing *maneuver warfare* or 3GW to the battlefield. *Tanks, aircraft, and long-range communication technologies* were the key enablers. Fighting became *non-linear* focusing more on *collapsing the enemy system of forces* rather than its outright destruction. Attacks focused on bypassing enemy positions, moving into his rear areas, and causing *strategic paralysis*. Defense was organized in depth, aimed at absorbing the enemy attack and creating conditions for a counter-attack. *Initiative* became more important than obedience, wherein orders were given regarding the results expected, not

²⁰ -do-.

²¹ Lind, William S., Col Keith Nightingale, Capt. John F. Schmitt, Col Joseph W. Sutton, and Lt Col Gary I. Wilson. 1989. “The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation”. *Marin Corps Gazette*, 1989.

regarding the method to be followed. Examples include World War-II and the Korean War.

4th Generation of Warfare²²

The 4GW is marked by the state's loss of monopoly over violence, wherein one protagonist may be a *state* while the other combatant may be an *ideological non-state actor/group*. This war is characterized by the blurring of lines between politicians, combatants, and civilians. It is more *asymmetric in nature*, wherein *indirect actions, terror attacks*, and perception management has gained more ground than *battlefield combat*. Examples include the Russo-Afghan war and the Iraq war.

5th Generation of Warfare

The later part of the 20th century was characterized by a rapidly changing geopolitical environment, globalization, proliferation of nuclear weapons, advent of technology, computers, the internet, hi-tech communication means, mass media, and social media all of which have had an irreversible impact on human life. These developments have also had a deep effect on human conflict ushering in a new age of warfare i.e., the *fifth-generation warfare*. The idea of 5GW is commonly associated with US Army Major Shannon Beebe²³ who describes 5GW as a “*vortex of violence, a free for all of surprise, destruction, motivated more by frustration than by any other coherent plan for the future.*” Another definition of 5GW is associated with US Marine Lt Col Stanton Coerr²⁴ who explains that “*5GW fighters will win by... pointing out the impotence of secular military might.... These fighters win by not losing, while we lose by not winning.*” 5GW being a relatively new concept lacks a universal definition as yet. The concept was born whence the war on terror was at its peak and was therefore initially tilted towards it. Later definitions have become more open and all-encompassing. 5GW now refers to present and future wars that may be fought in a multitude of domains including diplomatic, informational, military, and economic domains, etc, between states or non-state actors.

22 Lind, William. 2003. “The Four Generations of Modern War”. *Counterpunch.Org*. <https://www.counterpunch.org/2003/04/21/the-four-generations-of-modern-war/>.

23 Axe, David. 2019. “How to Win A ‘Fifth-Generation’ War”. *WIRED*. <https://www.wired.com/2009/01/how-to-win-a-fi/>.

24 -do-

It includes both *conventional* and *irregular forces* and is *non-linear*. Examples include Arab springs, the war in Syria, and the Crimean war.

Section IV: Alternative approaches to the Four Generation Model

The generational warfare model, as pioneered by Lind and his co-authors, has also received a fair share of criticism. Critics²⁵ argue that the start date of the 1GW is more likely to be in the 14th century at the time of the Hundred Years' War, rather than the signing of the treaty of Westphalia in 1648. Critics also argue that the 4GW model does not take into account the effect of the French Revolution on warfare and incorrectly accuses US Marines to be stuck in French fighting methods, whereas the Air-Land Battle concepts had already been absorbed by the US military since the 1980s. It is also argued that the historical evidence presented by Lind and others is too selective. Other critics²⁶ argue that the 4GW model fails to explain the cold war or terrorism, gives a flawed idea of future wars being *nontrinitarian* and its generations are not sequential e.g., firepower, maneuver, and insurgency all three were employed side-by-side in the Vietnam war. It is also stressed that while insurgencies existed in the age of classical warfare also, the 4GW model attempts to reinvent old-fashioned insurgencies as a new type of warfare and also misses out on the use of brute force in modern wars as displayed in Rwanda and Sudan.

Other experts and historians have also made attempts at understanding and defining warfare history albeit not as successfully as the 4GW model. Nevertheless, these models also merit further study and analysis. Russian thinkers²⁷ have also given an idea of six generations of warfare which include (1) *Edged weapons made of bronze, iron, and steel*; (2) *black powder unrifled weapons such as smooth-bore muskets and cannons*; (3) *powder rifled weapons such as modern accurate military rifles and artillery*; (4) *automatic and mechanized weapons such as machine guns*; (5) *nuclear weapons*; and

25 McKenzie, Kenneth. 1993. "Elegant Irrelevance: Fourth Generation Warfare". *US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters*, 1993. <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1671&context=parameters>.

26 Echevarria, Antulio. 2005. "Fourth-Generation Warfare and Other Myths". *Monograph*. <https://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/fourth-generation-war-and-other-myths/>.

27 Alderman, R., 2014. Warfare Evolution Blog: Next generation warfare part 2. [Blog] Available at: <<https://militaryembedded.com/radar-ew/signal-processing/warfare-evolution-blog-next-generation-warfare-part-2/>> [Accessed 26 June 2021].

(6) *non-contact warfare* which includes precision strike weapons such as laser/GPS-guided bombs, missiles, and artillery. Slipchenko also introduced the seventh generation as environmental warfare.

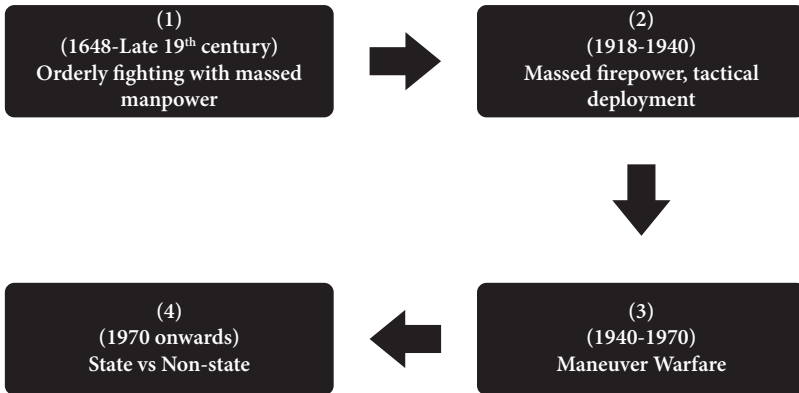
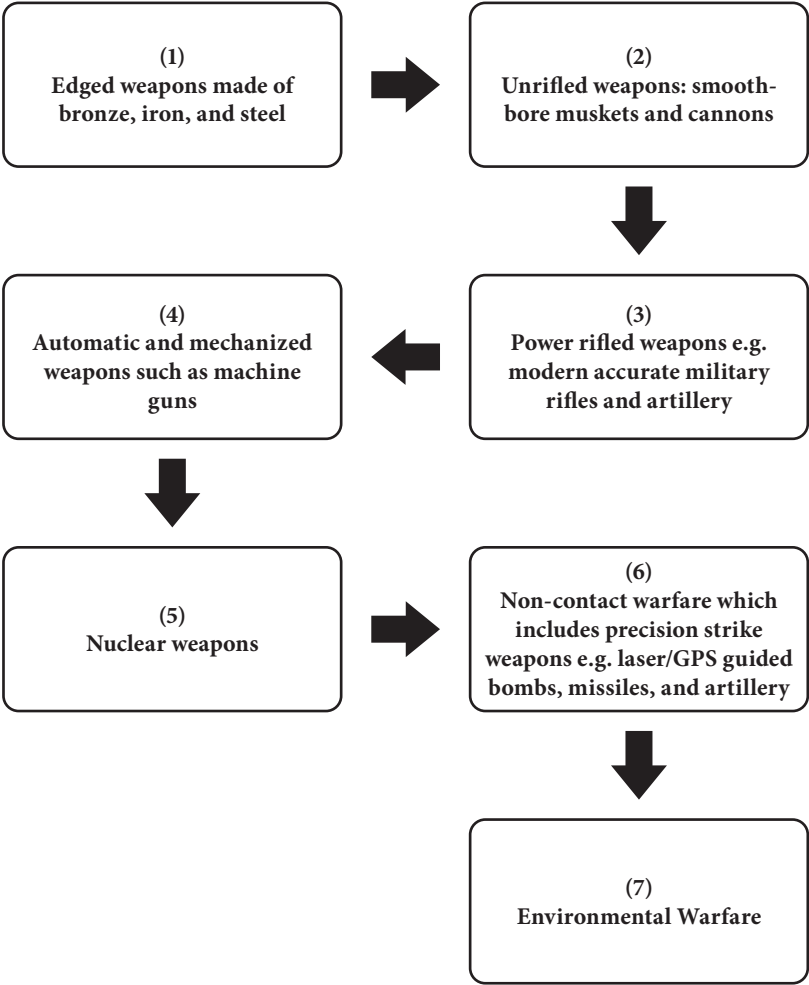


Figure 4: Four generation warfare model



*Figure 5: Slipchenko's sixth-generation warfare model;
Introducing the seventh generation*

Serial No	Generations of War	Duration	Characteristics	Examples
1	1GW	1648-1860	Tactics of line and column, phalanx formations, rigid drills, and an orderly battlefield. Wars are fought linearly. Operational art, not introduced yet. Front-loaded smooth-bore muskets, weapons of choice.	Napoleonic wars. American Revolutionary War. English Civil War.
2	2GW	Mid-19th to early 20th Century	Mechanical & technological advancements were introduced e.g., rifled guns, machine guns, and indirect fire. Tight-knit battlefield formations were abandoned in favor of tactical fire and movement. Attrition of enemy forces remained the main objective. “Artillery conquers, infantry occupies”. Operational art introduced by Prussians.	WW1. American Civil War. Boer War.

3	3GW	Early & Mid-20th Century	German Blitzkrieg maneuvers introduced 3GW to the battlefield. Fighting became non-linear focusing more on the collapse of the enemy system of forces rather than its destruction. Attack was aimed at deeper targets and defense was organized in depth, aimed at absorbing the enemy attack and creating conditions for a counterattack.	WW2 Korean War. Iraq War.
4	4GW	Mid & Late 20th Century	Marked by the state's loss of monopoly over violence, wherein one protagonist may be a state while the other may be a non-state actor / group. More asymmetric in nature, wherein terrorism and perception management have gained more ground than battlefield combat. Characterized by the blurring of lines between politicians, combatants, and civilians.	Vietnam War. Russo-Afghan war.

5	5GW	21st Century	Vortex of violence, a free for all of surprise, and destruction motivated more by frustration than by any other coherent plan for the future. 5GW fighters will win by ... pointing out the impotence of secular military might. ... These fighters win by not losing, while we lose by not winning.	Russian campaign in Crimea. Syrian crisis. Arab springs.
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Figure 6: Generations of warfare

Chapter 2

Deciphering Hybrid Warfare

“Every age has its own kind of war, its own limiting conditions, and its own peculiar preconceptions.”

- Carl Von Clausewitz¹

Section I: The Coming of Hybrid War

WITH THE CHANGING geopolitical landscape, quantum leaps in technology, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the evolution of cyberspace, and the growth of mass media especially social media, 5th generation warfare rapidly mutated into various visible/ invisible forms. While it was unanimously understood that warfare was changing, postulating accurately about the character of future wars remained a challenge. As countries or coalitions operated in different strategic environments, they held varying views about future wars, e.g., the US view of future wars was more affected by its geopolitical contest with China and global terrorism, European Union remained more concerned about Russian westwards expansion, the Middle East remained effected by Saudi-Iranian quest for regional dominance, and South Asia remained concerned with Indian hegemonic designs.

Such varying circumstances gave birth to various schools of thought and concepts such as irregular warfare, non-linear warfare, non-contact warfare, and hybrid warfare, etc. In essence, all these were attempts at understanding what the future holds so that corresponding preparations could be made for frustrating the enemy's designs. While all these views are backed by convincing logical arguments and are the output of the best minds of the time, nevertheless, as it is, the future remains full of surprises and one never seems fully prepared for it. Of these concepts, the term *hybrid war* has

¹ Carl von Clausewitz, Michael Howard, Peter Paret (1989). “On War”, p.593, Princeton University Press

gained more traction, which seemingly encompasses the complete range of kinetic and non-kinetic politico-military actions meant to induce a favorable behavior in the adversary. It is considered to be the warfighting method of the day and the future. The term has gained more prominence since Russia's 2014 campaign in which it wrestled Crimea away from Ukraine, however, some critics maintain that while the terminology may be a recent coinage, this nature of warfare has always been around, dating as far back as the Peloponnesian wars.

Section II: Why fight Hybrid?

Over time, several factors have induced the need for adopting a hybrid model of warfare. With the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the emergence of concepts such as *Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD)*, conventional military warfare is fast becoming a cost-prohibitive option. While on one hand, a revolution in military affairs and the consequent increase in the lethality of weapons has deterred adversaries from kinetic engagements, on the other hand, the internet blitz, electronic & social media, economic manipulation tools, and coercive diplomacy have all offered newer avenues for influencing the adversary.

Additionally, despite globalization leading to the interdependence of national economies, own national interests still remain supreme for each state. Since direct confrontations can cause irreparable damage to economies, the adversaries now prefer indirect hybrid models of fighting. This way they aim at achieving the required goals of leadership, superiority, and control with minimum use of resources and minimum damage.

Section III: Leading global perspectives on Hybrid Warfare

As evident from its nomenclature, hybrid war is a mix of various forms of warfare. Being a more recent term, a universally acceptable understanding or definition is yet to be carved out, as had remained the case with 'terrorism' for quite some time, post-9/11. Countries have therefore their perspectives, mostly configured around their perceived threat spectrum and the adversary. A deeper look at leading global perspectives will help in developing a better understanding of the subject.

US Perspective of Hybrid War

Undeniably, the USA possesses the most advanced, high-tech, and well-equipped conventional military machine the world has ever seen. Ironically, this conventional superiority creates a compelling logic for its adversaries to avoid the traditional model of warfighting and to seek some niche capabilities or some unconventional combination of technologies and tactics to gain an advantage. The enemy rightly chooses not to engage America at its strong point, rather it seeks engagements in its relatively weaker areas, in the not-so-conventional domains. Knowing this, America thus endeavors to explore these domains, and develop its core capabilities to fight there. In turn, American ideas continue to fashion and dominate world opinions about what kind of military challenges the future may hold. US literature indicates that it perceives itself as a victim of Russian and Chinese hybrid onslaughts and attempts to respond accordingly. Few of the prevailing US opinions about Hybrid Wars are explained in the succeeding paragraphs.

Lt Col (R) Dr. Frank G Hoffman (Distinguished Research Fellow at US National Defense University). US perspective about hybrid wars owes much to the writings of *Hoffman* who has been penning down his thoughts on the subject since 2005. Hoffman is of the view that the US has an inherent inclination towards conventional warfare and has not geared itself well for hybrid threats. He explained hybrid war in 2007 as:

“Threats that incorporate a full range of different modes of warfare including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder, conducted by both sides and a variety of non-state actors.”

- Hoffman²

General (R) Charles Krulak (Ex-Commandant Marine Corps), the 3-block war & the strategic corporal². Krulak initiated the idea of a 3-block war in 1999. 3-block war can be considered a precursor

2 Annis, Franklin. 2020. “Krulak Revisited: The Three-Block War, Strategic Corporals, And the Future Battlefield - Modern War Institute”. *Modern War Institute*. <https://mwi.usma.edu/krulak-revisited-three-block-war-strategic-corporals-future-battlefield/>.

to the present-day hybrid war concept. The 3-block war implied that a US force operating in one city may have to simultaneously *fight* the enemy in one city block, provide *humanitarian assistance* in an adjoining block, and undertake *peacekeeping operations* in yet another block. Such a myriad of tasks merited remodeling of the US forces. Krulak is also credited for the idea of the *Strategic Corporal*, whose sub-tactical actions could potentially lead to larger effects as he would remain continuously exposed to an advanced info-war environment, wherein one small right or wrong move by the corporal could spread across the globe within minutes through social media platforms, thus producing strategic effects.

General (R) James Mattis (Ex-US Secretary of Defense). In 2014, as a speaker at the Centre for Strategic & International Studies, Mattis reflected on hybrid wars in the following manner:-

“Hybrid threats are going to characterize the future... hybrid means you are going to see a mix of conventional and unconventional ... my point is you’re going to see these hybrid wars where they don’t fit neatly into one category or another even though they may be largely characterized by irregular or insurgent or conventional that sort of thing ... there is no template for hybrid threats, the Israeli-Lebanon conflict is a textbook example of a hybrid fight and our troops are simply going to have to be able to swing both ways”

- James Mattis³

Lt Gen (R) McMaster (Ex-National Security Adviser to the US President). In 2018, in his outgoing address as the US NSA, McMaster described Hybrid warfare as follows:-

“Hybrid warfare is a pernicious form of aggression that combines political, economic, informational, and cyber assaults against sovereign nations.... Tactics include infiltrating social media, spreading propaganda, weaponizing information, and using other forms of subversion and espionage.”

- McMaster⁴

3 Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2014. *Irregular Warfare, Hybrid Threats, And the Future Role of Ground Forces: Keynote*. [video] Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1ZM3CfWh1I>> [Accessed 20 August 2020].

4 Heffernan, Virginia. 2018. “H.R. McMaster’s Parting Shot at His Dictator-Loving Boss”. *Los*

Peter R Mansoor (US Military Historian). Mansoor has described hybrid warfare as:

“Conflict involving a combination of conventional military forces and irregulars (guerrillas, insurgents, and terrorists), which could include both state and non-state actors, aimed at achieving a common political purpose.”⁵

Joint Operating Environment 2035 (JOE-2035) – US Joint Chiefs of Staff. JOE-2035 outlines the US’s understanding of the future security environment, the challenges it entails, and the direction in which the US should develop its Joint Forces to meet these challenges. It defines the future security environment with two overarching challenges i.e., *contested norms* and *persistent disorder*. It further defines six different contexts of the future warfare i.e. (1) *violent ideological competition*, (2) *threatened US territory and sovereignty*, (3) *antagonistic geopolitical balancing*, (4) *disrupted global commons*, (5) *a contest for cyberspace* and (6) *shattered and reordered regions*. In these hybrid contexts, it views that:-

“A number of revisionist states will employ a range of coercive activities to advance their national interests through combinations of direct and indirect approaches designed to slow, misdirect, and blunt successful responses by targeted states. These hybrid stratagems will be designed to spread confusion and chaos while simultaneously avoiding attribution and potential retribution.”⁶

Joint Operating Environment further goes on to state that:

“Competitor states are likely to employ hybrid stratagems using a confusing combination of direct and indirect approaches to contest U.S. global interests. These approaches will be designed to avoid overt commitment to major foreign operations, minimize the risk of escalation, provide plausible deniability, and avoid the costs of direct involvement. They may be characterized by credible threats to take and hold key terrain near their borders, an intensification of warfare by proxy, and the employment of

Angeles Times, 2018. <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-heffernan-20180407-story.html>.

5 Wither, James K. 2016. “Making Sense of Hybrid Warfare”. *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 15 (2): 73-87. doi:10.11610/connections.15.2.06.

6 U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2016. “Joint Operating Environment 2035 - The Joint Force in A Contested and Disordered World.” pg. 6.

*new technologically-advanced military capabilities. Further, these conflicts will feature regional nuclear deterrence in support of conventional military operations and a desire to build 'off ramps' to avoid escalation with the United States."*⁷

The Chinese Perspective

Chinese military thought mostly remains shrouded in mystery as access to Chinese military writings has remained scant and is still so due to China's media control and censorship policies. Negligible material is made available by Chinese authorities to present their side of the story. Material available on the internet is often written by US authors who view China as an adversary and thus present the US's opinion of China's hybrid war and not the real Chinese perspective. It is thus left to the imagination of the researcher to see beyond ideological and national biases and decipher the Chinese version.

Three important developments that can be considered as turning points in the more recent Chinese strategic thought are the *Sino-Vietnam war (1979)* in which the PLA could not perform well, the *Gulf War (1990)* in which US forces displayed astounding speed of success with bare minimum casualties, and the launching of Chinese military reforms in 2015, once *Central Military Commission* headed by *President Xi Jinping* issued the *Opinions on deepening reforms on National Defense and Armed Forces*⁸.

Strands of the Chinese version of hybrid warfare can be traced back to 1999 when the idea of *Unrestricted warfare* was introduced by Col Liang and Col Xingsui who emphasized the effects of globalization and commented that future wars will witness the blurring of boundaries between war & peace and soldiers & civilians.⁹ The year 2003 saw China release the *Political work guidelines for the People's Liberation Army* introducing the concept of the three warfares i.e. *public opinion warfare, psychological warfare, and legal warfare*¹⁰, all of which

7 U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2016. "Joint Operating Environment 2035 - The Joint Force in A Contested and Disordered World." pg. 29.

8 Kung, Chan. 2020. "Three Turning Points of China's Military Strategic Thoughts". *Modern Diplomacy*.<https://modern diplomacy.eu/2020/07/10/three-turning-points-of-chinas-military-strategic-thoughts/>.

9 Liang, Qiao, and Wang Xiangsui. 2015. *Unrestricted Warfare*. Brattleboro, Vt: Echo Point Books & Media, LLC.

10 Kania, Elsa. 2016. "The PLA'S Latest Strategic Thinking on The Three Warfares". *China*

combine to form *Political warfare*. The *Political Work Department*, subordinate to the *Central Military Commission* is made responsible for these wars. They are aimed at controlling the prevailing discourse, influencing public perceptions to advance Chinese interests, and neutralizing the adversary's capability to respond.

China has also adopted a holistic approach to *Cyberwarfare* and the government encourages the creation of *cyberwarrior units* composed of university students and civilians¹¹. Chinese diplomatic corps is also increasingly playing hardball, pushing CCP narratives and countering foreign criticism¹². Since the inclusion of the Chinese State Councilor for foreign affairs into the CCP politburo in 2017, the Chinese diplomatic corps have become more energetic and aggressive, often referred to as *Wolf warriors*¹³ named after a Chinese action film. China's extensive use of fishing boats in the South China Sea is viewed as part of its coercive maritime diplomacy and these boats are being termed *Hybrid civilian naval forces*¹⁴. Chinese social media is accused of exploiting the openness of the American democratic society by inserting intentionally distorted and biased narratives thereby increasing its influence in the geopolitical system by showing its government in a positive light and arguing that China's rise would be beneficial for the global community.¹⁵ Even the formation of islands in the South China Sea by China through *terraforming* is viewed as part of Chinese regional gunboat diplomacy¹⁶.

Brief 16 (13). <https://jamestown.org/program/the-plas-latest-strategic-thinking-on-the-three-warfares/>.

- 11 Miracola, Sergio. 2018. "Chinese Hybrid Warfare". *ISPI*. <https://www.ispionline.it/en/pubblicazione/chinese-hybrid-warfare-21853>.
- 12 Maracola, Sergio. 2018. "Chinese Hybrid Warfare". *ISPI*. <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/chinese-hybrid-warfare-21853>.
- 13 Cheng, Dean. 2020. "Challenging China's "Wolf Warrior" Diplomats". Report Asia. The Heritage Foundation. <https://www.heritage.org/asia/report/challenging-chinas-wolf-warrior-diplomats>.
- 14 Korkmaz, Huseyn. 2020. "ANALYSIS - Hybrid Warfare and Maritime Militia in China". *Aa.Com.Tr*. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/analysis/analysis-hybrid-warfare-and-maritime-militia-in-china/1897259>.
- 15 Insikt Group. 2019. "Beyond Hybrid War: How China Exploits Social Media to Sway American Opinion". Recorded Future. <https://www.recordedfuture.com/china-social-media-operations/>.
- 16 Gunneriusson, Håkan. 2020. "Russia and China's Ongoing 'Hybrid Warfare' - When Does It Cross the Line?" *Lima Charlie World*. Accessed August 6. <https://limacharlienews.com/national-security/russia-china-hybrid-warfare/>.

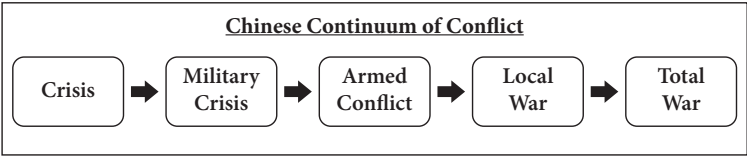


Figure 7: China's perceived continuum of conflict

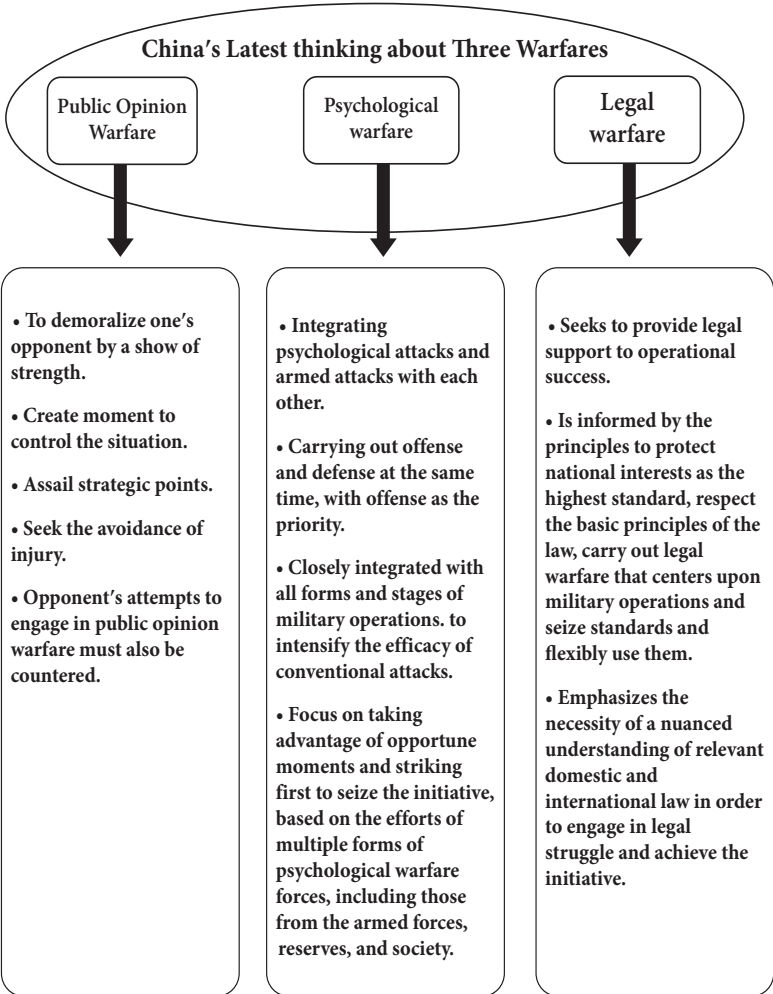


Figure 8: China's latest strategic thinking about three warfares

European Perspective

European Union's or NATO's perspective of Hybrid warfare revolves mostly around Russian revisionist designs and has gathered more mass since Russian activities in Crimea, Donetsk, Luhansk, and Ukraine. *The European Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Countering Hybrid Threats* was created in Finland in 2017. With 16 participating states, it focuses on European security and characterizes hybrid threats as¹⁷:-

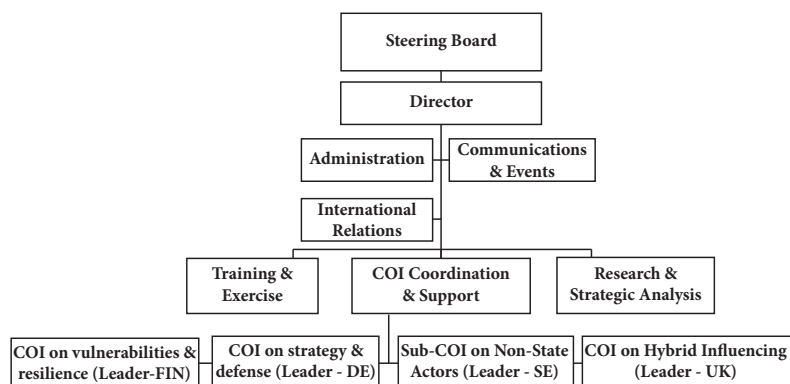
- Coordinated and synchronized action, that deliberately targets systemic vulnerabilities of democratic states and institutions, through a wide range of means.
- The activities exploit the thresholds of detection and attribution as well as the different interfaces (war-peace, internal-external, local-state, national-international, friend-enemy).
- The activity aims to influence different forms of decision-making at the local (regional), state, or institutional level to favor and/or gain the agent's strategic goals while undermining and/or hurting the target.

Functions of the Hybrid CoE are¹⁸:-

- To be a platform for nations to come together to share best practices, build capability, test new ideas, and exercise defense against hybrid threats.
- To be a neutral facilitator between the EU and NATO through strategic discussions and exercises.
- To lead the conversation on countering hybrid through research and sharing of best practices.

17 "Hybrid Threats - Hybrid Coe". 2020. *Hybrid Coe*. <https://www.hybridcoe.fi/hybrid-threats/>.

18 "What Is Hybrid Coe? - Hybrid Coe". 2020. *Hybrid Coe*. Accessed August 23. <https://www.hybridcoe.fi/what-is-hybridcoe/>.



Members, Austria, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the UK and the USA.

Figure 9: Structure of Hybrid CoE¹⁹
 Note: COI – Communities of Interest

British Army in particular has raised a complete brigade, the 77th Brigade, which states that: “through targeted Information Activity and Outreach we contribute to the success of military objectives in support of Commanders, whilst reducing the cost in casualties and resources”²⁰. In practice, it is a brigade of Facebook warriors²¹, skilled in psychological operations and the use of social media to undertake non-lethal warfare in the information age, essentially aimed at controlling the narrative in support of military operations.

In its journal, *The Military Balance 2015*, The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in England reflects on Russia’s ‘Hybrid’, ‘ambiguous’ or ‘non-linear war’ as the use of military and non-military tools in an integrated campaign, designed to achieve surprise, seize the initiative and gain psychological as well as physical advantages utilizing diplomatic means, sophisticated and rapid

19 “Structure - Hybrid CoE”. 2020. *Hybrid CoE*. <https://www.hybridcoe.fi/structure/>.

20 ARMY Be the best. 2022. *77th Brigade Influence and Outreach*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/formations-divisions-brigades/6th-united-kingdom-division/77-brigade/>> [Accessed 2 February 2022].

21 MacAskill, Ewen. 2015. “British Army Creates Team of Facebook Warriors”. *The Guardian*, 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/jan/31/british-army-facebook-warriors-77th-brigade>.

information, electronic and cyber operations, covert and occasionally overt military and intelligence action, and economic pressure.²²

Israel's Perspective

McCulloh and Johnson have described the Israeli approach to hybrid war as follows:

“Israeli military theorists describe hybrid threats and hybrid warfare as a method of social warfare which is unbounded by social constraints. Therefore, hybrid threats not only gain a physical advantage through the combination of conventional technology and organization with unconventional tactics and applications, but also gain a cognitive advantage by the very lack of social restrictions that conventional state forces must adhere to such as the Law of Land Warfare, Geneva Convention, and Rules of Engagement. Added to this dual advantage is the idea that hybrid forces operate as a networked system that is much quicker than a conventional force in utilizing and responding to popular opinion, its support base, and internal feedback or learning.”

- McCulloh and Johnson²³

Indian Perspective

As India increasingly sees itself as a future power of sorts, debate on the future of warfare has also gained pace within the Indian military hierarchy. India acknowledges and has incorporated the idea of hybrid warfare in both its *Joint Doctrine Indian Armed Forces – 2017* and *Indian Army Land Warfare Doctrine - 2018*. It reflects on hybrid wars as a mix of conventional, unconventional, and multi-domain wars, within which the difference is blurred between the politician, combatant, and civilians and which encompass chaos, psychological, media, cyber, and economic warfare. The following extracts give an insight into Indian perspectives on hybrid warfare:-

22 “The Military Balance 2015”. 2015. International Institute for Strategic Studies. <https://www.iiss.org/publications/the-military-balance/the-military-balance-2015>.

23 McCulloh, Timothy, and Richard Johnson. 2013. “Hybrid Warfare”. JSOU Report 13-4. Florida: Joint Special Operations University. https://www.socom.mil/JSOU/JSOUPublications/JSOU%2013-4_McCulloh%2CJohnson_Hybrid%20Warfare_final.pdf.

*“The character of future wars is likely to be ambiguous, uncertain, short, swift, lethal, intense, precise, non-linear, unrestricted, unpredictable, and **hybrid** The first Generation lasted long but the transition from the second to the current fifth generational has been rapid. It laid the foundation for **Hybrid Warfare**, including supporting chaos, psychological and media warfare, cyber warfare, economic warfare, etc. It is a conflict characterized by a blurring of the lines between war and politics, combatants and civilians. Simply put, it is a war in which one of the major participants is not a State but rather a violent non-state actor or non-state actor sponsored by a State.”*

- Joint Doctrine Indian Armed Forces - 2017²⁴

*“Future conflicts will be characterized by operating in a zone of ambiguity where nations are neither at peace nor war - a ‘Grey Zone’ which makes our task more complex. Wars will be **Hybrid**, a blend of conventional and unconventional, with the focus, increasingly shifting to multi-domain warfare varying from non-contact to contact warfare Non-Contact and **Hybrid domains** of conflict are now being integrated into the conventional and sub-conventional realms and could be non-declaratory and non-attributable in its execution, a characteristic of Gray Zone Warfare that needs to be catered for..... Due to the increased threat of **hybrid warfare**, the Indian Army will prosecute operations with designated forces, equipped and mandated to effect attacks/retaliation in the Information Warfare (IW) domain. Adequate capabilities will be developed to dominate the **hybrid warfare** environment, both along our Northern and Western borders and in dealing with internal security, in coordination with earmarked services and agencies.”*

Indian Army Land Warfare Doctrine – 2018.²⁵

“Hybrid Warfare is a form of warfighting which is all-encompassing. Rather than focusing on destroying an enemy’s military capability, it focuses on population and infrastructure

24 Ministry of Defense. 2017. “Joint Doctrine Indian Armed Forces”. New Delhi: Directorate of Doctrine, Headquarters Integrated Defense Staff.

25 Indian Army. 2018. “Land Warfare Doctrine - 2018.”

*as the center of gravity. It covers the full spectrum of warfare by combining the vigor/lethality of conventional warfare with the fanatical fervor of irregular warfare and the untapped spectrum of technology for cyber and info warfare. It also entails creating acts of criminal disorder, law & order issues, and public disorder in the target country during peace Chanakya's articulation in 'Arthashastra' highlights the various variants of warfare. **Mantrayudha** is the use of diplomacy to wage and win wars followed by **Prakasayudha** or conventional warfare under the laid down norms of warfare. **Kutyudha** refers to concealed warfare which is an amalgam of treachery, deceit, and other irregular means, and finally **Tusnimyudha**; silent warfare wherein war is waged without declaring it and fought by proxies and collusion the manifestation of Hybrid warfare can be in multiple forms; terror attacks, diplomatic intervention, political pressure, economic sanctions, economic disruptions, intelligence ops, propaganda, and cyber-attacks all intertwined with the employment of conventional forces in the background. This includes disruptive techniques like stone-throwing, mob protests, and school burning. As is well known, Hybrid operations tend to last a long time and their prime intent is to maintain deniability.*

- General Bipin Rawat
Indian Chief of Defense Staff²⁶

"Hybrid War can best be described as a combination of conventional and sub-conventional threats and can be unleashed both by the state and non-state actors."

- Brig Anil Gupta²⁷

"India has been the target of the irregular and unrestricted warfare capabilities of Pakistan and China. The hybrid threat will be more pronounced in the future as China consolidates its

26 Idsa.in. 2018. *9th Y B Chavan Memorial Lecture on Addressing the Challenges of Hybrid Conflict in the 21st Century* | Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses. [online] Available at: <<https://idsa.in/keyspeeches/y-b-chavan-memorial-lecture-by-coas-gen-bipin-rawat>> [Accessed 7 July 2021].

27 Gupta, Brig Anil. 2016. "Are We Prepared Against Hybrid Threats". *Indian Defense Review*. <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/spotlights/are-we-prepared-against-hybrid-threats/>.

presence in Indian Ocean Region and South Asia. The Indian state should acknowledge that in a borderless battlefield, it is no longer possible to rely on military forces and weapons alone to achieve national security in the larger strategic sense Hybrid war is on the cusp of conventional and sub-conventional wars and exploits regular and irregular capabilities to achieve the desired results —that of fighting a war against a strong nation without the risk of major retribution Hybrid wars cannot be fought by blunt military power; they require the intellectual preparation of a battlespace The elements of hybrid warfare that makes it potent are the fusion of regular and irregular forces, simultaneity and non-linearity of application, multi-modality (military and non-military), and criminality embedded in the acts of terror or subversion. Large-scale conventional wars are rather easy to understand, but the unrestricted application of just and unjust means make hybrid war complex and unpredictable. One of the prime characters of the hybrid war is that it attacks through the military, social, cultural, and cyberspace to paralyze the traditional and non-traditional capabilities of a state to defend and secure its vital national interests.”

- Narendar Kumar²⁸

While these definitions may not be identical, certain common threads can be sensed amongst them. While the conventional understanding of warfare implies direct kinetic fighting, mostly involving regular militaries, the hybrid model additionally encompasses the use of other less common non-kinetic mediums such as diplomacy, intelligence, print, electronic and social media, lawfare, cyber warfare, and manipulative use of international financial institutions all aimed at inducing a favorable behavior in the enemy.

Section IV: The Spectrum of Hybrid Warfare

The Clausewitzian principle of war being a continuation of policy by other means²⁹ has stood the test of time. Like all wars, the overriding

²⁸ Kumar, Narendar. 2017. “War Beyond Rules: Hybrid War and India’s Preparedness”. *CLAWS Journal* Summer 2017: 58-74. [https://archive.claws.in/images/journals_doc/231704000_05_chap\(1\)\(1\).pdf](https://archive.claws.in/images/journals_doc/231704000_05_chap(1)(1).pdf).

²⁹ “Clausewitz: War as Politics by Other Means - Online Library of Liberty”. 2016. *Oll*.

aim of hybrid wars is to increase own power and induce a compliant behavior in the adversary. The range and extent of hybrid tools applied have a direct linkage with the adversary's perceived culminating point. Where objectives are achieved by employing comparatively benign tools such as diplomatic isolation, economic sanctions, engineered use of electronic or social media, or other similar forms of coercion, there is no need of notching up the heat further. However, where needed, the conflict can be notched up to the kinetic domain at a place and time of own choosing, having significantly softened up the target through other tools. Thus, a Hybrid war may or may not turn kinetic. Hybrid war can be fought in all possible domains of competition where the adversary can be forced to comply, including diplomatic, informational, economic, military, cyber, social, lawfare, and kinetic domains.

Diplomatic Domain

*Morgenthau*³⁰ reflects on diplomacy as the most important element of national power. A strong diplomatic arm can enable a country to further its national objectives without upping the ante. Raising coalitions, galvanizing international opinion against opponents, and causing diplomatic isolation are means available in the diplomatic domain. During the ongoing US-China competition for global dominance, both sides have taken several diplomatic measures to increase pressure on the other, a case in point being the arrest of the Chief Financial Officer of Huawei in Canada, in response to which China also arrested two Canadian citizens. The shrinking reach of *Huawei*, due to US diplomatic pressure on Europe, forcing Europe not to trade with Huawei is another example of the strong-arm tactics that diplomacy can apply.

The US has consistently accused China of following unfair trade practices, intellectual property theft, human rights abuses in Xinjiang and Hong Kong, and aggressive moves in the East and South China Seas. It uses its international clout to convince-cum-pressurize other

Libertyfund.Org. <https://oll.libertyfund.org/pages/clausewitz-war-as-politics-by-other-means>.

30 Your Article Library. 2020. *National Power: Elements, Evaluation and Limitations*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/india-2/national-power-elements-evaluation-and-limitations/48489>> [Accessed 25 October 2020].

countries to tow its line. At one point in March 2020, the US stopped funding the World Health Organization (WHO) accusing it of its bias toward China³¹. On another occasion, the US reduced the number of Chinese journalists allowed from five state-run media outlets, from 160 to 100; in response, China expelled 13 US journalists³². In a similar tit-for-tat, the US closed down the Chinese Consulate in Houston Texas, whereas China closed the US consulate in Chengdu, in July 2020³³. Both sides have accused the other of spreading the coronavirus to an extent that Trump has called it the ‘China Virus’, while China has alleged that the Coronavirus was spread by US soldiers³⁴. The Chinese leader has aptly described diplomacy in his golden words: -

“Every diplomacy is the continuation of war by other means.”

- Zhou En Lai³⁵

Economic Domain

Today’s intrinsically intertwined geo-economic landscape makes it difficult to economically target one state, without antagonizing others. Nevertheless, the application of economic pressure remains the most viable method to bring a state onto one’s terms. The means available in this domain include the imposition of economic sanctions through world bodies, embargoes, boycotts, suspension of aid, freezing of capital assets, prohibition of investment, one-on-one trade wars, tariff wars, and manipulation through International Financial Institutions. The economic stamina of the adversaries defines the length of the engagement and its possible outcome. In 1930, the US adopted the *Smoot-Hawley Act* for the protection of its farmers and increased the tariff on European imports. In retaliation, other countries also placed higher tariffs on US

31 “Timeline: U.S. Relations With China 1949–2020”. 2020. *Council on Foreign Relations*. <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-relations-china>.

32 “Timeline: U.S. Relations With China 1949–2020”. 2020. *Council on Foreign Relations*. <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-relations-china>.

33 “Timeline: U.S. Relations With China 1949–2020”. 2020. *Council on Foreign Relations*. <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-relations-china>.

34 Gladstone, Rck. 2020. “How the Cold War Between China and U.S. Is Intensifying”. *New York Times*, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/22/world/asia/us-china-cold-war.html>.

35 “Zhou Enlai - Google Arts & Culture”. 2018. *Google Arts & Culture*. <https://artsandculture.google.com/entity/zhou-enlai/m0dbk8?hl=en>.

goods which eventually forced the US to reconsider its tariffs³⁶. The ongoing Sino-US trade war is a classic example wherein both sides have consistently been applying newer measures to wrestle the other to the ground. The US has placed tariffs of over \$360 bn on Chinese goods; in response, China has placed tariffs of \$110 bn on US goods³⁷.

On the Huawei front, the US banned its agencies from using Huawei equipment and asked the rest of the world to follow suit, alleging that Huawei equipment was used for spying by the Chinese government; Huawei has sued the US government in response. The US has also designated China as a *currency manipulator*³⁸. The Sino-US trade war has however by and large remained fruitless, rather counterproductive, in that it has led to higher prices for consumers and financial difficulties for farmers in the US, while in China it has slowed down the growth rate of the country and producers have shifted their manufacturing units to elsewhere in Asia to avoid getting caught between the two powers. Internationally, the trade wars have induced instability in stocks and inflation.

Informational Domain

This domain is the mainstay of the hybrid arena wherein selected and directional information is used as a weapon against the adversary and as such is the pinnacle of hybrid warfare. It includes the use of propaganda, engineered use of electronic & social media, fake news aimed at spreading discontent in the public, increasing apprehensions between the masses and state institutions, or feeding in fake information to corrupt the decision-making chain. Russia applied its version of Infowar in 2014 in Crimea in the form of *'Maskirovka'* or *'Reflexive Control Theory'*³⁹. Through the use of *'Little Green Men'*, it was able to temporarily distance itself from the occupation of Crimea, discouraged the US and other Western powers from intervening, and presented those powers as 'weak'

36 "Trade War Definition". 2020. *Investopedia*. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/t/trade-war.asp>.

37 "A Quick Guide to the US-China Trade War". 2020. *BBC News*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-45899310>.

38 "Timeline: U.S. Relations With China 1949–2020". 2020. *Council on Foreign Relations*. <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-relations-china>.

39 Kamphuis, 2018. *Information Warfare in An Information Age*. [online] National Defense University Press. Available at: <<https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/Article/1130649/information-warfare-in-an-information-age/>> [Accessed 29 November 2020].

and unwilling to help. Russia has allegedly used Maskirovka to affect the results of the US Elections of 2016⁴⁰ also. The US Joint Publication reflects on Information Operations (IO) as follows: -

“As the strategic environment continues to change, so does IO. Based on these changes, the Secretary of Defense now characterizes IO as the integrated employment, during military operations, of IRCs (information-related capabilities) in concert with other lines of operation to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decision making of adversaries and potential adversaries while protecting our own. This revised characterization has led to a reassessment of how essential the information environment can be and how IRCs can be effectively integrated into joint operations to create effects and operationally exploitable conditions necessary for achieving the joint force commander’s (JFC’s) objectives.”⁴¹

Cyber Domain

As everyday life becomes completely dependent on computers and networked systems, vulnerability to cyber-attacks also becomes a growing concern of security strategists across the globe. Today, operations in the cyber domain can become potentially more devastating than many heavyweight weapons, wherein certain software are designed to copy and steal sensitive information, others are designed to override systems while still others are designed to destroy systems. Cyber warfare tools may include hacking official databases, bank accounts, airline systems, military installations, nuclear assets, launching viruses, etc. The software employed in this field includes *Demons*, *Viruses*, *Trojans*, and *Logic Bombs*, etc. Cyberwarfare methods include *phishing*, *spear-phishing*, *baiting*, *malware*, *pretexting*, *quid pro quo*, *tailgating*, *vishing*, and *water-holing*⁴². NATO has created a “NATO Creative Cyber Centre of Excellence”⁴³ to navigate the frontiers of cyberwarfare. The legal

40 Kowalewski, Annie. 2017. “Disinformation and Reflexive Control: The New Cold War”. *Georgetown Security Studies Review*. <https://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/2017/02/01/disinformation-and-reflexive-control-the-new-cold-war/>.

41 Department of the Army. 2014. “Information Operations.”

42 “9 Examples of Social Engineering Attacks | Terranova Security”. 2020. *Cyber Security Awareness*. <https://terranovasecurity.com/examples-of-social-engineering-attacks/>.

43 “CCDCOE - The NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence Is a

community has penned down the “*Tallinn Manual 2.0 on the International Manual applicable to Cyber Operation 2017*”⁴⁴ defining and legislating against cyber-attacks.

In June 2019, the USA launched a cyberattack on Iranian weapon systems in retaliation to Iran’s downing of a US drone⁴⁵. The destruction of Iranian Nuclear Centrifuges in 2010 by the *Stuxnet* worm is also alleged to be the result of a US cyber-attack⁴⁶. *Lazarus Group*⁴⁷ (aka *Hidden Cobra*) is alleged to be a North Korean state-sponsored hackers organization accused of having attacked the South Korean government and various other banks in the Far East. Russia has been accused of the *NotPetya* cyberattacks⁴⁸ on the Ukrainian financial systems in 2017. In March 2019, Israel responded to an alleged cyber-attack of Hamas in real-time by employing aerial weapons, setting a new precedent for military retaliation against cyber-attacks⁴⁹. Alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 Elections also has a cyber angle to it, as the manipulation was caused in the cyber domain.

Social Domain

Engineering public opinion, mostly covertly, is a major objective of hybrid wars. In the social domain, hybrid wars identify, target, and exploit the internal fault lines of society. This may take the form of engineered social movements, color revolutions, exploitation of public resentments, employing proxies, supporting secessionist trends and exploiting religious or sectarian divides, etc. All these

Multinational and Interdisciplinary Hub of Cyber Defense Expertise.”. 2020. *Ccdcoe.Org*. <https://ccdcoe.org/>.

44 “Tallinn Manual 2.0”. 2020. *Ccdcoe.Org*. <https://ccdcoe.org/research/tallinn-manual/>.

45 BBC. 2019. “US ‘Launched Cyber-Attack on Iran Weapons Systems’”, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-48735097>.

46 Zetter, Kim. 2013. “An Unprecedented Look at Stuxnet, The World’s First Digital Weapon”. *Wired*. <https://www.wired.com/2014/11/countdown-to-zero-day-stuxnet/>.

47 Vijayan, Jai. 2020. “New Threat Activity by Lazarus Group Spells Trouble for Orgs”. *Dark Reading*. <https://www.darkreading.com/threat-intelligence/new-threat-activity-by-lazarus-group-spells-trouble-for-orgs/d/d-id/1338812>.

48 Nakashima, Ellen. 2018. “Russian Military Was Behind ‘Notpetya’ Cyberattack in Ukraine, CIA Concludes”. *The Washington Post*, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/russian-military-was-behind-notpetya-cyberattack-in-ukraine-cia-concludes/2018/01/12/048d8506-f7ca-11e7-b34a-b85626af34ef_story.html.

49 Doffman, Zak. 2019. “Israel Responds to Cyber Attack with Air Strike on Cyber Attackers in World First”. *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/zakdoffman/2019/05/06/israeli-military-strikes-and-destroys-hamas-cyber-hq-in-world-first/?sh=3711e52fabf5>.

tools conform to a grander design and remain subservient to the overarching aim of the war. Social media platforms have repeatedly proved themselves to be valuable assets in this domain, with their ability to sway public opinion and galvanize crowds. The *Rose Revolution of Georgia* (2003), *Orange revolution of Ukraine* (2004), and *Purple revolution of Kyrgyzstan* (2005) have amply exhibited the potential of such activities.

Lawfare

Broadly speaking, Lawfare is the use of international or national laws in support of military objectives. The term was popularized by USAF General Dunlap in 2001 who explained lawfare as the *use of laws as weapons of war*⁵⁰. In the Israeli-Palestinian context, several court cases have been initiated by both sides over time to declare the others' activities illegal with a view to galvanize international support. *The Al-Haq vs Secretary of State for foreign and commonwealth affairs* case of 2009 in which Al-Haq brought a case in UK courts against Israeli actions in the Gaza Strip⁵¹, is a case in point. In the South China Sea context, *the South China Sea arbitration 2013-16 (The Republic of Philippines vs the Peoples' Republic of China)*⁵² is an example in which the Philippines placed its claim to parts of the South China Sea under

the UNCLOS (United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea) in international courts; the court later ruled in its favor as China did not participate in the case. In another case, Iran took the USA to ICJ once the USA backed out of the *Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)*⁵³.

50 "About Lawfare: A Brief History of The Term and The Site". 2020. *Lawfare*. <https://www.lawfareblog.com/about-lawfare-brief-history-term-and-site>.

51 "ICD - Al-Haq V. UK - Asser Institute". 2020. Internationalcrimesdatabase.Org. <http://www.internationalcrimesdatabase.org/Case/894/Al-Haq-v-UK/>.

52 "Cases | PCA-CPA". 2020. *Pca-Cpa.Org*. <https://pca-cpa.org/en/cases/7/>.

53 Aslam Shad, Hassan. 2018. "Lessons in Lawfare". *Thenews.com.pk*. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/380101-lessons-in-lawfare>.

Kinetic Domain

While it is possible to knock some sense in the enemy through non-kinetic means, occasions would also merit upping the ante by resorting to kinetic measures. It must however be appreciated that the kinetic prong is not launched due to the failure of the non-kinetic prong, rather it is conceived from the outset as part of the hybrid grand strategy. The non-kinetic precedes the kinetic to soften up the target state and create a conducive environment by molding international opinion in one's favor. Kinetic prong is not aimed at the total destruction of the enemy, but to bring him around to one's terms.

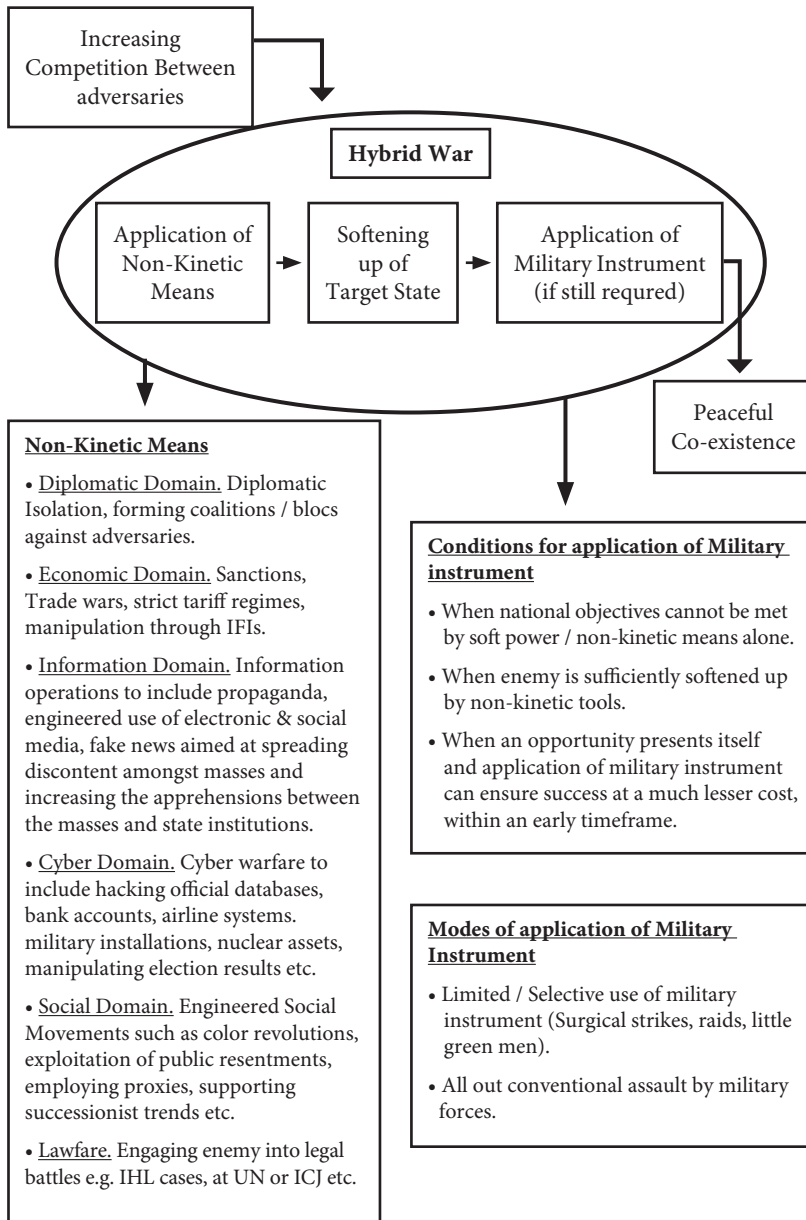


Figure 10: Hybrid warfare spectrum

Section V: Differentiating between Hybrid and other Contemporary Concepts of Warfare

In the post-second world war era, increased lethality of weapons, nuclear proliferation, economic interdependency, and increased interconnectivity have made conventional conflict an unattractive and non-profitable option. Belligerents are therefore increasingly engaging with each other in non-traditional battlespaces. In this context, several concepts and theories have emerged to define the warfare of the future. Some of these concepts which interpolate with hybrid warfare are described in the succeeding paragraphs.

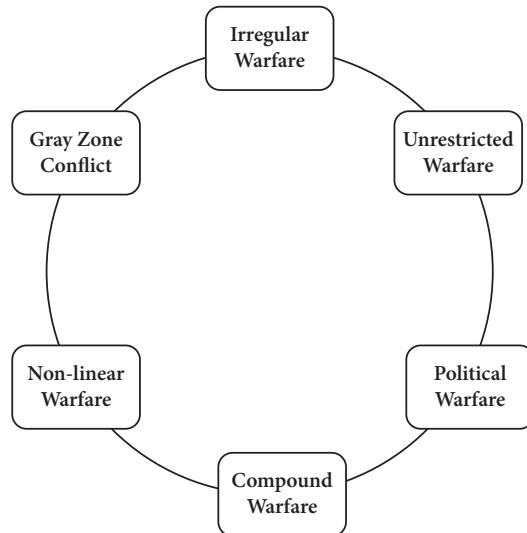


Figure 11: Contemporary Warfare Concepts

Irregular Warfare

Irregular warfare (IW) refers to wars involving the use of irregular forces either on one or both sides. US Department of Defense defines Irregular warfare as: -

“A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range

*of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will..... First, IW is a form of armed conflict. As such, it replaces the term "low-intensity conflict." Second, IW is a form of warfare. As such, it encompasses insurgency, counterinsurgency, terrorism, and counterterrorism, raising them above the perception that they are somehow a lesser form of conflict below the threshold of warfare."*⁵⁴

Gray Zone Conflict

Gray Zone conflicts are characterized by activities that fall short of all-out wars. US Special Operations Command describes the Gray Zone conflict as:-

*"..... competitive interactions among and within state and non-state actors that fall between the traditional war and peace duality. They are characterized by ambiguity about the nature of the conflict, opacity of the parties involved, or uncertainty about the relevant policy and legal frameworks..... Gray zone challenges can be understood as a pooling of diverse conflicts exhibiting common characteristics. Notably, combining these challenges does not imply a single solution, since each situation contains unique actors and aspects. Overall, gray zone challenges rise above normal everyday peacetime geopolitical competition and are aggressive, perspective-dependent, and ambiguous."*⁵⁵

Non-Linear Warfare

The inclusion of non-linear warfare in common parlance is accredited to Russia. As opposed to linear warfare, non-linear warfare relates to the parallel application of the means available to a government including kinetic and non-kinetic, soft power, and hard power. The idea finds its roots in the writings of Vladislav Surkov⁵⁶ and is perhaps the closest to hybrid war, among all contemporary ideas. It is explained as follows:-

⁵⁴ US Department of Defense (2007). *Irregular Warfare - Joint Operating Concept*. p.6.

⁵⁵ US Special Operations Command (2015). *White Paper: The Gray Zone*.

⁵⁶ Pomerantsev, Peter. 2014. "How Putin Is Reinventing Warfare". *Foreign Policy*. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/05/05/how-putin-is-reinventing-warfare/>.

“Linear conflicts are defined by a sequential progression of a planned strategy by opposing sides, whereas nonlinear conflict is the simultaneous deployment of multiple, complementary military and non-military warfare tactics. A nonlinear war is fought when a state employs conventional and irregular military forces in conjunction with psychological, economic, political, and cyber assaults. Confusion and disorder ensue when weaponized information exacerbates the perception of insecurity in the populace as political, social, and cultural identities are pitted against one another. This “blurring” divides influential interest groups and powerful political organizations by exploiting identity politics and allegiances. Additionally, nonlinear warfare tactics act as a deterrent towards a more powerful ally of the besieged state.”⁵⁷

Unrestricted Warfare

The concept of Unrestricted warfare was introduced by two Chinese Air Force Colonels, Liang, and Xiangsui in 1999. Their opinions remained influenced by the profound effects of technological advancements and globalization. Their perspective is explained as:-

“...this kind of war means that all means will be in readiness, that information will be omnipresent, and the battlefield will be everywhere. It means that all weapons and technology can be superimposed at will, it means that all the boundaries lying between the two worlds of war and non-war, of military and non-military, will be totally destroyed, and it also means that harmony of the current principles of combat will be modified, and even that the rules of war may need to be rewritten.”⁵⁸

Political Warfare

Political warfare can be termed as a precursor to modern-day hybrid wars. Broadly, it covers the use of all political instruments at the disposal of a government to compel an adversary to conform to its own dictates.

57 Stowell, Joshua. 2019. “What Is Hybrid Warfare? Non-Linear Combat in the 21st Century”. *Global Security Review*.[https:// globalsecurityreview.com/hybrid-and-non-linear-warfare-systematically-erases-the-divide-between-war-peace/?utm_source=MadMimi](https://globalsecurityreview.com/hybrid-and-non-linear-warfare-systematically-erases-the-divide-between-war-peace/?utm_source=MadMimi).

58 Liang, Qiao, and Wang Xiangsui. 1999. *Unrestricted Warfare*. 1st ed. Beijing: PLA Literature and Arts Publishing House Arts.

It can include a combination of both peaceful and aggressive tools. In American parlance, the term political warfare was coined by US State Department diplomat George Keenan as follows:-

“Political warfare is the logical application of Clausewitz’s doctrine in time of peace. In the broadest definition, political warfare is the employment of all the means at a nation’s command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives. Such operations are both overt and covert. They range from such overt actions as political alliances, economic measures (as . . . the Marshall Plan), and ‘white’ propaganda

*to such covert operations as clandestine support of ‘friendly’ foreign elements, ‘black’ psychological warfare, and even encouragement of underground resistance in hostile states.”*⁵⁹

Compound Warfare

Compound wars witness the employment of both conventional and irregular forces. These forces may be used alongside one another, or the irregular forces may be used preceding conventional forces. Frank Hoffman explains the advantages of employing both forces as follows:-

*“The complementary effects of compound warfare are generated by its ability to exploit the advantages of each kind of force, and by its ability to increase the nature of the threat posed by each kind of force. The irregular force attacks weak areas and forces a conventional opponent to disperse his security forces. The conventional force generally induces the adversary to concentrate for defense or to achieve critical mass for decisive offensive operations.”*⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Keenan, George. 1948. “The Inauguration of Organized Political Warfare.”

⁶⁰ Hoffman, Frank G. 2007. *Conflict In The 21st Century*. Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies.

Chapter 3

Case Studies

THE TERM *HYBRID warfare* holds different meanings in different parts of the world. These variations in perspectives stem from the socio-political makeup of societies coupled with their perceived threat or adversaries. A study of the European, US, Middle Eastern and South Asian contexts allows one to identify similarities and differences of hybrid warfare as perceived and fought in these regions. Ensuing case studies are aimed at enabling the reader to do this.

Section I: Case Study No 1 – Russia’s New Way of Fighting

Geopolitical Contest in the Background

The 20th century predominantly remained plagued by the Soviet-US cold war. The 21st century per se appears no different. While the global war on terror did occupy the global center stage initially, later years have witnessed the revival of the geopolitical contest of yesteryears between the Russian Federation and the US-EU bloc. Both Georgia and Ukraine were desirous of more integration with the western bloc in search of economic gains and prosperity but Russian apprehensions remained that this bonhomie and resultant honeymoon would be short-lived, eventually leading to the deployment of US-NATO forces in Russia’s immediate neighborhood, something that was entirely unacceptable to Russia.

The anarchic nature of geopolitics induces a desire in many countries to gain more space for themselves in the international arena to better safeguard their national interests. Drawing inspiration from the not too old and glorious Soviet era, Russia now seeks to revive its lost status of the bipolar world order of the last century. Russian aims behind hybrid onslaughts in its immediate neighborhood are to further its international standing, increase its sphere of influence either by compellence or by coercion as required, and maintain its regional hegemony. It wants to prevent the US-EU bloc from its

threatening ingression into its immediate neighborhood. In short, it wants its neighborhood to behave by Russian dictates.

Gerasimov Doctrine

The origins of Russia's idea of hybrid warfare are commonly traced back to the Russian Armed Forces Chief, General Valery Gerasimov's article '*The Value of Science is in the Foresight*,' published in the February 2013 issue of *Military-Industrial Kurier*. It has been aptly named the *Gerasimov Doctrine*¹. Although Mark Galeotti who had coined the term, later retracted and said that the doctrine doesn't exist², however by that time the genie was out of the bottle and the term had caught the global fancy and attained a life of its own. This could not be undone by Galeotti's retraction as the US-led NATO countries have always been wary of Russian hybrid methods in Eastern & Central Europe. Gerasimov looks at modern war as follows:

"The very "rules of war" have changed. The role of non-military means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and, in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness.

The focus of applied methods of conflict has altered in the direction of the broad use of political, economic, informational, humanitarian, and other non-military measures - applied in coordination with the protest potential of the population.

All this is supplemented by military means of a concealed character, including carrying out actions of informational conflict and the actions of special operations forces. The open use of forces - often under the guise of peacekeeping and crisis regulation - is resorted to only at a certain stage, primarily for the achievement of final success in the conflict."³

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- 1 McKew, Molly. 2017. "The Gerasimov Doctrine". *Politico Magazine*, 2017. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/09/05/gerasimov-doctrine-russia-foreign-policy-215538>
 - 2 Galeotti, Mark. 2019. "I'm Sorry for Creating The 'Gerasimov Doctrine'". *Foreign Policy*. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/03/05/im-sorry-for-creating-the-gerasimov-doctrine/>
 - 3 Gerasimov, Valery. 2016. *The Value of Science is in the Foresight*. eBook. Military Review. https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20160228_art008.pdf

The Ukrainian Conflict (Crimea, Donetsk & Luhansk)

Having remained part of the Crimean Khanate in the 15th century and having been split between Russians and the Habsburgs thereafter, Ukraine found itself in control of the Red Army, post-1917 Russo-Ukraine war. 1954 saw the Soviets hand over Crimea to Ukraine as a symbolic gesture, while Ukraine finally gained its independence in 1991, post the Soviet collapse. In the two treaties that followed, namely, the *Budapest Memorandum* (1994) and the *Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation Partnership* (1997), Russia expressed its commitment to the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine. Thereafter, the three *Black Sea Fleet agreements* (1997) and *Kharkiv Accords* (2010) witnessed the leasing of Crimean naval facilities to Russia in return for cheap Russian gas. The Ukrainian conflict that followed, found its roots in the turf war between the Russian Federation and the EU-NATO block.

The *Orange Revolution of 2004* witnessed the pro-west *Yushchenko* come to power while the 2010 elections saw the pro-Russia *Yanukovych* come to power in Ukraine. Yanukovych's refusal to sign an association agreement with the EU and his inclination towards the Russian-backed *Eurasian Economic Union* pushed the Ukrainian society towards *Euromaidan* and the *Anti-Euromaidan* protests, which led to more than 100 deaths, the overthrow of Yanukovych's government, and Russian intervention in South-Eastern Ukraine. The referendum that followed also called the *Referendum at Gunpoint*, witnessed an overwhelming majority of Crimeans' support for joining Russia. Later years witnessed the creation of the *Luhansk Peoples Republic* and *Donetsk Peoples Republic* by pro-Russian separatists and the attempts by Ukrainian forces to take back these areas. The ensuing war resulted in more than 10,000 deaths. In the larger context, the Ukrainian crisis has remained a tug of war between Russia and the EU to stretch their control over the country.

Russia's War with Georgia (Abkhazia & South Ossetia)

Abkhazia and South Ossetia were two regions of Georgia where people did not identify themselves as Russians and aspired for independence. In the late 1990s' once Georgia drifted closer to the

EU-NATO camp, Russia attacked Georgia and separated both these areas from mainland Georgia, declaring them independent countries. To this day, there are only a handful of countries (which are almost completely under Russian influence) that have accepted the independent status of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Russian Hybrid Means & Methods

Having revamped and mobilized its complete military wherewithal, Russia has created an extensive toolkit for its hybrid operations. Succeeding paragraphs throw light on some of the methods it uses.

Information Operations: Russian information operations aim at shaping the political environment in the target countries in its favor. Its crafty use of media outlets such as *Russia Today* and *Sputnik News*, strategic communications means, targeted television programming, funding of European think tanks, and employment of Internet trolls, bots, and fake news farms aim at furthering Russia-centric narratives.

Cyber Warfare: Russian cyber warriors have been accused of hacking into international information systems to influence elections and other political outcomes, a case in point being Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign.

Use of Proxies: Russia has often been accused of using proxies to further its interests. Examples include backing of anti-EU groups in the 2016 referendum on trade with Ukraine in the Netherlands, supporting the anti-shale gas, and other protest movements in Bulgaria that are frustrating Bulgaria's efforts to reduce its dependence on Russian energy resources and *Night Wolves*, a biker club and ultranationalist, anti-American gang.

Use of Economic influence: Russia holds great leverage over the EU in the economic domain mostly due to the EU's dependency on Russian gas. It used energy as a tool of foreign policy when it shut off the natural gas supplies to Ukraine during the winters of 2006 and 2009 to coerce Ukraine into agreeing on the price of gas.

Clandestine Measures: Russian hybrid tool kit also includes the use of espionage, bribing, extortion, and attempts to influence

vulnerable political figures. Russian military intelligence, for example, is believed to have instigated a 2016 plot to overthrow the pro-NATO government in Montenegro.⁴ Russian special forces were crucial in seizing Crimea and supporting separatists in the Donbas, and are likely operating in several NATO-allied countries.

Diplomatic influence: Russia uses diplomacy to support its preferred political parties and candidates in target countries while deriding the positions of political leaders more critical of Moscow.

Section II: Case Study No 2 - Color Revolutions & Regime Changes

There is much debate on the drivers of the color revolutions. The Russian version suggests that the US-EU bloc was the main driver behind these color revolutions as it sought to replace pro-Russian leaders with pro-western leaders in these countries. The western bloc on the other hand suggests that the revolutions were indigenous and were a direct consequence of Russian interference in neighboring countries aimed at installing compliant governments. Either way, meddling in foreign politics and inducing regime changes remain major strands of hybrid warfare.

Rose Revolution in Georgia – 2003

The Rose Revolution came about in Georgia in November 2003, once the opposition leader (later president) Mikhail Saakashvili and his supporters entered the Georgian parliament while holding red roses. The protests were caused by disputed elections and culminated in the holding of new elections which ushered in a pro-western government. With Georgia gravitating towards the European bloc, Russo-Georgian relations stumbled.

4 MILIC, P., 2019. <https://apnews.com/article/elections-international-news-russia-military-intelligence-milo-djukanovic-9782460f2ca943cca88b628405033c2c> Click to copy RELATED TOPICS Elections Int'l News Russia Military intelligence Milo Djukanovic Europe Montenegro Trials Podgorica 2 Russian spies sentenced in Montenegro in coup attempt. AP, [online] Available at: <<https://apnews.com/article/europe-russia-elections-trials-international-news-9782460f2ca943cca88b628405033c2c>> [Accessed 14 September 2021].

Orange Revolution in Ukraine – 2004

The Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004-5, was again triggered by elections marred with massive corruption, voter intimidation, and electoral fraud. The revolution included a series of acts of civil disobedience, sit-ins, and general strikes organized by the opposition. This revolution led to the second run-off election in which the pro-west Yushchenko won against the pro-Russia Yanukovych.

Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan – 2005

The Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan (2005) again found its roots in allegations of rigged elections and led to the resignation of President Akayev and new elections. The revolutionaries alleged corruption and authoritarianism by President Akayev, his family, and supporters. Akayev perforce had to flee to Russia.

Euromaidan Revolution – 2014

The Euromaidan revolution, also known as the *Revolution of Dignity* or the *2014 Ukrainian revolution* occurred when a series of events involving protests, riot police, and shooters in Kyiv, culminated in the ousting of the elected President Viktor Yanukovych and the overthrow of the incumbent government.

Section III: Case Study No 3 – Indo-Pak War 1971

Context of the events of 1971

To date, India has been unable to reconcile with the creation of Pakistan, and has consistently worked for Pakistan's implosion and 'homecoming'. Sadly, this underlying theme or overarching objective has marred possibilities of respectful and peaceful coexistence and continues to steer Indo-Pak relations from Day-1. Indian efforts reached partial fruition in 1971 with the dismemberment of Pakistan and the birth of Bangladesh. Numerous factors contributed to the 1971 Indo-Pak war; some indigenous, others planted from far and near. Firstly, the Bengali community, despite enjoying majority in numbers, felt deprived and perceivably reduced to the rank of second-class citizens within their own homeland. Secondly, both

East and West Pakistan were separated by 1000 miles of adversarial territory i.e., India. Thirdly, India had been clandestinely cultivating, supporting, and pursuing secessionist tendencies in Bangladesh since the partition. It eventually created, financed, assisted, and partially participated alongside the *Mukti Bahini* (leading separatist organization), initially undercover, and later openly, to further its grand designs against Pakistan.

Shaping the Environment

The 1971 Indo-Pak war was fought within the Cold War geopolitical overhang. India signed an agreement, '*Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation*'⁵ with the USSR in August 1971 to garner Soviet support. Pakistan at the time was an active US ally. It was anticipated that the US would keep India at bay from meddling in Pakistan's internal matters, and would also extend some sort of military assistance to Pakistan against India if and when needed. The US 'tilt' (Kissinger's term) did not however manifest much on the ground. On the external front, successful Indian diplomatic maneuvers painted the 'flooding in of refugees' and 'carnage in East Bengal' as the *casus belli* and managed to keep the USA from extending any significant material support to Pakistan – the movement/ deployment of the 6th fleet to the Bay of Bengal notwithstanding.

A resolution introduced by the US in United Nations against the Indian attack was vetoed by USSR. USSR deployed its Naval assets off the Bay of Bengal and successfully warded off US Naval Task Force-74 led by the aircraft carrier 'USS Enterprise' and the British aircraft carrier 'Eagle'. Seeing USSR firmly onto the Indian side, China also exercised restraint from helping Pakistan, as the memory of the Sino-Russian conflict (1969) was very fresh. This allowed India to pullout six infantry divisions from the Sino-Indian border and use them against Pakistan. On the internal front, the roots of Bengali discontent were continuously nurtured and exploited by India to increase the feeling of injustice and subjugation till it blew up into a full-grown insurgency. India then jumped in, lock, stock and barrel.

5 "Treaty Of Peace, Friendship and Co-Operation". 1971. *Mea.Gov.In*. <https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/5139/Treaty+of++>.

Indian Meddling in Pak Affairs – The Agartala Shorojontro Mamla (1968)

Concrete and undeniable evidence of Indian involvement came to the fore in 1968 when the Agartala conspiracy case was uncovered. It was alleged that Sheikh Mujeeb-ur-Rehman and his followers had conspired to enact a coup d'état to separate East Pakistan from the West. The plot had been hatched in the Indian city of Agartala in connivance with Indian military leaders; hence the name. At that time, Mujeeb's arrest was projected as an act against Bengali nationhood by the Indian media. This orchestration proved two-pronged as on one hand Bengalis were getting charged to the hilt and on the other international sympathy drifted away from Pakistan. In 2011⁶, the Bangladesh Parliament's Deputy Speaker blithely accepted⁷ the existence of the conspiracy in a parliamentary session.

Rise of the Mukti Bahini

One of the main contours of the Indian hybrid strategy was the indoctrination and military training of Bengali refugees in India and sending them back to East Pakistan to fight against Pakistani state authorities. '*Mukti Bahini*' had grown from the folds of '*Mukti Fauj*', which in turn had grown from the folds of '*Sangram Parishad*'⁸. This guerrilla group was trained by India in Army-operated training camps in West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Tripura. While Pakistan Army once successfully pushed back the Mukti Bahini in March 1971 through '*Operation Searchlight*', Indian '*Operation Jackpot*' in May 1971, started churning out and infiltrating approximately 5,000 fighters to East Pakistan on monthly basis. RAW operatives and regular Indian Army personnel fought alongside the militia; a fact later unashamedly admitted by none less than the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi⁹. Indian

6 *The Daily Star*. 2010. "Textbook 'Incorrectly' Describes Agartala Case: Shawkat", 2010. <https://www.thedailystar.net/news-detail-142345>

7 "Agartala Conspiracy Case Was Not False". 2011. *Bdnews24.Com*. <https://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2011/02/23/agartala-conspiracy-case-was-not-false>

8 Saleem, Farrukh. 2016. "Mukti Bahini the Forgotten Terrorists". *The News*, 2016. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/105117-Mukti-Bahini-the-forgotten-terrorists>

9 "Modi In Bangladesh". 2015. *AAJ News*. <https://www.aaj.tv/english/latest/modi-in-bangladesh/>

involvement in the creation of Mukti Bahini is described by Dr. Farrukh Saleem as follows:

“According to Archer Blood, an American career diplomat who served as the last American Consul General to Dhaka, “Indian soil was made available for training camps, hospitals and supply depots for the Mukti Bahini” and the Mukti Bahini had a “safe haven to which it could retire for rest, food, medical supplies and weapons...” In Nagaland, the Indian Armed Forces established a jungle airstrip for the Mukti Bahini from where Indian Air Force trained pilots conducted sorties by Otter DHC-3 aircraft. India’s Eastern Command trained more than 400 naval commandos and frogmen to drown vessels in Chittagong, Chandpur and Narayanganj. In Dehra Dun, Major-General Oban “selected the best personnel from the Mukti Bahini” and gave them political and military training. One Mukti Bahini Sector Commander, Quazi Nooruzzaman, writes: “Having received the training, political commandos found it embarrassing to identify themselves as products of the Indian authorities. So, they gave themselves the name of Bangladesh Liberation Force.”¹⁰

Propaganda & Psychological Warfare

November 1970 witnessed the deadliest cyclone in the history of East Pakistan. Cyclone Bhola¹¹ took 500,000 lives and the incumbent government was criticized for its callous response towards the Bengali plight, contributing towards the landslide victory of the Awami League in the elections held the following month. India used this opportunity to drive a wedge between the Bengalis and the state. In another incident, India’s lead spy agency RAW staged a hijacking drama¹² by Kashmiri fighters and used the same as evidence of Pakistan’s warmongering. It banned all Pakistani flights over its land on this pretext, which eventually delayed the deployment of Pakistani

10 Saleem, Farrukh. 2016. “Mukti Bahini the Forgotten Terrorists”. *The News*, 2016. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/105117-Mukti-Bahini-the-forgotten-terrorists>

11 “Remembering The 1970 Bhola Cyclone, The World’s Deadliest Weather Event”. 2020. *NECN*. <https://www.necn.com/news/national-international/remembering-the-1970-bhola-cyclone/1995763/>

12 “The Ganga Hijack Drama: How RAW Fooled Pakistan — Indian Defense News”. 2020. *Indian Defense News*. <https://defenceupdate.in/the-ganga-hijack-drama-how-raw-fooled-pakistan/>

forces to East Pakistan. Furthermore, ousting of Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy from power and attacks on East Pakistani leadership in West Pakistan were cleverly used by Indian radio and newspapers to incite the gullible Bengalis.

Modi's acknowledgment of India's role in the breaking up of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh

In June 2015, Indian Prime Minister Narinder Modi was bestowed with the '*Bangladesh Liberation War Honors*' by Bangladesh's President Abdul Hamid, during the former's visit to Dhaka. During the visit, Narinder Modi accepted how India had conspired and maneuvered to break up Pakistan, highlighting his very personal involvement as a volunteer in the *Satyagraha Movement*.¹³

Section IV: Case Study No 4 – Peloponnesian War (431-405 BCE)

The Athenian *Thucydides*, considered one of the first historians, has given a detailed account of the Peloponnesian war fought between the Athens-led '*Delian League*' and Spartan-led '*Peloponnesian League*' between 431 – 404 B.C. The war ended in Spartan victory.

The Spartan agricultural and military systems were built on *Helots*, in the area of *Laconia* and *Messenia*. Spartans were well aware of this and intended to keep sizeable forces in these areas to keep the people under control. Athenian plans, for example, their efforts to build a base in Pylos rested partially on the idea of creating conditions for a Helot uprising, thus adding a hybrid dimension to a conventional conflict. Once the Athenians fortified Pylos in 425 BC, they garrisoned the outpost with Messenians, who began incursions into Laconia. Helots soon began to desert to Pylos, creating a national emergency in Sparta. The Spartans were unable to fight on both the internal and external fronts, and therefore offered terms of peace. The mere threat of hybrid war had brought the Spartans to terms. Thucydides writes:-

“The Spartans, hitherto without experience of incursions or a warfare of the kind, finding the Helots deserting, and fearing the march of revolution in their country, began to be seriously

13 *The News*. 2015. “Indian Forces Fought Along Mukti Bahini: Modi”, 2015. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/12923-indian-forces-fought-along-mukti-bahini-modi>.

uneasy, and in spite of their unwillingness to betray this to the Athenians, began to send envoys to Athens, and tried to recover Pylos and the prisoners.”¹⁴

Section V: Case Study No 5 – Syrian Crisis (2011 onwards)

Context of the Syrian Fighting

Syria, a part of the ‘*cradle of civilization*’¹⁵, has remained under the Alawite rule since the bloodless coup of Hafiz Al-Assad in 1970. His son, Bashar-Al-Assad succeeded his father and became the president in the year 2000, and was also re-elected in 2007. Widespread corruption, nepotism, political repression, uneven distribution of wealth, drought, discredited Baathist ideology, and rule by a Shia minority propelled Syria towards the ‘*Arab Spring*’¹⁶ by March 2011. The state’s use of brute force caused an armed rebellion and the creation of the ‘*Free Syrian Army*’. Fault lines deepened and civil war broke out in the country. Fighters jumped in from neighboring countries, while different international players rendered support to their favorite groups. Chaos ensued, from which the country has not been able to recover to date.

Role of International Players

Russo-Syrian relations date back to the cold war era once Syria was strongly entrenched in the Soviet camp. Russia has a naval base in Syria, its only base in the Mediterranean, and also enjoys deep-rooted business and defense relations with it. Russia is thus on Assad’s side along with China. On the other side, we have the USA which calls Assad’s government illegitimate and backs the rebels. It is supported by France and was earlier supported by the UK as well till the British parliament voted against involvement in the internecine Syrian fight. Oil pipeline politics also lie at the heart of the issue as Syria aims at

14 Murray, Williamson, and Peter Mansoor. 2012. *Hybrid Warfare: Fighting Complex Opponents from The Ancient World to The Present Time*. 1st ed. Cambridge University Press.

15 “Syria An Ancient Pearl, The Cradle of Civilizations Where History Began”. 2020. *Homsonline.Com*. <https://homsonline.com/EN/Syria/Syria.htm>.

16 “Arab Spring”. 2020. *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

building a pipeline from Iran, which passes through Iraq and Syria onwards to Europe; a project that is strongly opposed by the US.

Role of Regional Players

The crisis has deepened the divide in the gulf wherein Saudi Arabia and Iran are fighting their turf wars. Iran has been in staunch support of the Assad regime and is supported by Lebanon, Hezbollah, and Palestine. Saudi Arabia and Qatar support the rebels. They are aided by Turkey, which has always remained a NATO member and has had strained relations with Syria. Israel is the only player that is presently confused about choosing sides. Though it has fought three wars with Syria and as such opposes the Assad regime, however, it also cannot support the rebels considering them extremists and a possible threat to the Israeli state.

Internal Groupings

To the outsider, just trying to figure out who is fighting whom in Syria is a challenge in itself. On the Syrian government side are the *Syrian Armed Forces*, *National Defense Force* (a militant group organized by the government), *Shabiha* (irregular forces loyal to the Baath party), *Al-Abbas Brigade* (Shia militant group), *Popular front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command* (Palestinian group) and Hezbollah (Shia militant group). On the rebel side, there are the *Free Syrian Army* (military personnel who defected from Syrian forces), Syrian Islamic Liberation Front (rebel coalition supported by Turkey and Arab Nations), Al-Nusra Front (Al-Qaeda affiliate), Syrian Islamic Front (Salafist organization), *Islamic State of Iraq and Levant* (mostly Iraqi insurgents), *Ahfad Al-Rasul Brigade* (funded by Qatar) and *Army of Islam* (rebels supported by Saudi Arabia).

Situation in Syria

The Syrian war can be looked at from different perspectives. From one point, it is an example of proxy wars between superpowers to enhance/retain their respective spheres of influence, using regional and local players. From another standpoint, it is an unshielded fight for dominance between regional players. Yet at the local level, it is

a fight for freedom and is fought against tyranny, oppression, and autocratic exploitation; different layers of adversarial contexts, all fighting for different motives and goals. The war has also witnessed the fighting of conventional and irregular forces, at places against each other and at places side-by-side. Who is fighting whom and why has been a repeated question in the Syrian context. The motives of belligerents have evolved since 2011, accordingly, their demands and fighting methodology have also changed. The direct involvement of American, Turkish, Russian, and Iranian ground forces has confused the military landscape, each fighting for his own myopic goals.

Section VI: Case Study No 6 – Hezbollah-Israel War 2006

The 2006 *Lebanon War* or the *Second Lebanon War* was fought mostly in Northern Israel and Golan heights. The conflict included cross-border raids, the firing of rockets on border towns, ambushes, abductions, failed rescue attempts, air and artillery engagements, aerial and naval blockades, and the dropping of thousands of leaflets and hundreds of thousands of computerized voice messages that finally ended with a UN-brokered ceasefire. Hezbollah's growth over the years from a guerilla force to a more conventional army went largely unnoticed and became apparent only during the 2006 war. The arsenal it used during the war had not been seen in the use of the terrorists till then. During the 34-days war, Hezbollah displayed tactics and capabilities beyond expectations. It exploited the rocky surface for movement and made defendable hilltop villages. Despite being numerically inferior, its units appeared well-trained, very disciplined, and well-versed with the terrain. By the end of the war, though Hezbollah's arsenal was depleted, its credibility had enhanced whereas the Israeli Defense Forces had suffered a rude wake-up call. Hezbollah's use of the media was also unprecedented, especially *Tv Manar* and *Radio Nour*.¹⁷ The *Winograd Report* ordered by the Israeli government after the war reflected on the war as follows:-

“Overall, we regard the 2nd Lebanon war as a serious missed opportunity. Israel initiated a long war, which ended without

17 Piotrowski, Marcin. 2015. “Hezbollah: The Model of a Hybrid Threat”. *Css.Ethz.Ch*. <https://css.ethz.ch/en/services/digital-library/publications/publication.html/188946>.

its clear military victory. A semi-military organization of a few thousand men resisted, for a few weeks, the strongest army in the Middle East, which enjoyed full air superiority and size & technology advantages. The barrage of rockets aimed at Israel's civilian population lasted throughout the war, and the IDF did not provide an effective response to it. The fabric of life under fire was seriously disrupted, and many civilians either left their home temporarily or spent their time in shelters. After a long period of using only standoff firepower and limited ground activities, Israel initiated a large-scale ground offensive, very close to the Security Council resolution imposing a cease-fire. This offensive did not result in military gains and was not completed. These facts had far-reaching implications for us, as well as for our enemies, our neighbors, and our friends in the region and around the world."

- Winograd Report¹⁸

Section VII: Case Study No 7 – Saudi Arabia-Iran Conflict¹⁹

The Saudi-Iran conflict finds its roots in the Iranian revolution of 1979 whereafter the ideology in Iran delegitimized the Saudi Kingdom, and the divide between these predominantly Shia and Sunni countries deepened. Both sides seek a larger role for themselves in the Gulf region and the Muslim world as a whole. While KSA views itself as the leader of the Muslim ummah, holding the holy entities of Mecca and Madina, Iran raises its leadership flag through increased support for the Palestinian cause and its saber-rattling against Israel. Both countries supported opposing sides during the Gulf War 2003 and have lately started to engage each other in other domains also. Iran attempts to incite violence in the Saudi Shia community and Houthi rebels in Yemen, while Saudi Arabia is blamed for fueling the Kurd separatist movement in Iran. In Syria, Iran supports the government while Saudi Arabia supports the rebels. Iraq has already slipped out from the Saudi camp towards the Iranian camp. Similarly,

18 *The New York Times*. 2008. "English Summary of The Winograd Commission Report", 2008. <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/30/world/middleeast/31winograd-web.html>.

19 Munteanu, Răzvan. 2021. "Saudi Arabia Vs. Iran: From Proxy to Hybrid Warfare". *The Market for Ideas*. <http://www.themarketforideas.com/saudi-arabia-vs-iran-from-proxy-to-hybrid-warfare-a115/>.

both countries are on the opposing sides in Bahrain. In Lebanon, Iran has major clout due to the presence of Hezbollah, while Saudi Arabia is attempting to reduce this presence. In the case of Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia supported the Wahabbist *Ittihad-e-Islamia*, while Iran supported the Shia *Hizb-e-Wahdat*. Later, KSA supported the Taliban government while Iran opposed it.

Section VIII: Conclusions from Case Studies

Each case study is unique and brings forward a new aspect of hybrid, however following conclusions can be drawn:-

- Hybrid war is a continuous paradigm and has blurred the difference between war and peace wherein a continuous state of no war – no peace prevails.
- All elements of national power at the disposal of a belligerent are applied to subdue the adversary and make him conform to one's own will. Hybrid is thus concurrently fought in all domains may it be diplomatic, intelligence, military, economic or social.
- The build-up to the application of the military instrument is well-crafted. It includes demonizing the enemy by an elaborate media campaign, diplomatically isolating him, crippling his economy through sanctions, and Infowars.
- The non-kinetic actions, earlier thought to precede the fight are now very much a part of the fight itself, rather much of the fight is now being fought through non-kinetic actions, application of the military instrument is merely to reap the benefits of these non-kinetic actions. In fact, it is possible that an effective non-kinetic maneuver may eliminate the requirement of a kinetic follow-up completely.

Chapter 4

Hybrid War Against Pakistan

Section I: Is Pakistan really Facing a Hybrid Onslaught?

FIRST THING FIRST. Is Pakistan actually facing a hybrid onslaught, or is it only that its India-centric paranoia is working up? Taking a holistic view, it comes to the fore that in the past two decades, despite Pakistan's unmatched contributions to the war on terror, and despite being the only country that has been successfully able to bottle down the genie of terrorism, it continues to be viewed as part of the problem, rather than as part of the solution. International security advisories treat it as a no-go area, the safety and security of its nuclear assets have been repeatedly questioned, numerous economic sanctions have been imposed on it, over time, foreign aid has remained conditional to the extent of arm-twisting, armed forces have been amassed on its borders twice in the preceding decade threatening all-out wars, its mega-development projects such as CPEC have been consistently demonized, foreign intelligence agencies have been freely operating within its folds (several such operatives having been caught), despite immense potential, its tourism industry stands at rock-bottom, and social media platforms are full of fake, belligerent, and confused narratives against it.

Taking all these aspects into account, it is certainly correct to conclude that Pakistan has been subjected to an orchestrated hybrid onslaught. What is this onslaught aimed at? Who are the main players? Is the end objective turning Pakistan into a pliant state? Is it aimed at breaking it up and absorbing it? Is it aimed at shelving its nuclear program? Is it aimed at keeping it in a turbulent state to discourage perceived Chinese expansion toward the Indian Ocean? Succeeding pages are aimed at assessing the objectives and nature of this hybrid onslaught and finding a way around it.

Section II: Geo-political-cum-regional context of Hybrid onslaught against Pakistan

As the world slowly but surely gravitates from a uni-polar to a bi-polar order and USA and China inch closer to the *Thucydides Trap*¹, Pakistan finds itself at an important crossroad, wherein it is compelled to choose a side. Historically, Pakistan had been part of the US camp right through the Cold War era, up until the fall of the USSR in 1991 and its choice had served it reasonably well. However, in the post-cold war timeframe, it became a victim of US sanctions, mostly due to its nuclear program. With the dawn of the 21st century, it found itself at the epi-center of the war on terror and was sucked into the war on the US-led coalition's side, albeit remaining accused of playing a double game, despite very heavy losses and human sacrifices.

In China, Pakistan found a time-tested friend who was now rising fast to the geopolitical center stage and was getting assertive by the day. Through CPEC (the BRI flagship project), China vowed to invest \$46 billion in Pakistan's infrastructure at a time when Pakistan's economy was getting crushed under the stress of debt. Incidentally, in the last 50 years, Sino-Indian relations have seen more lows than highs, the lowest being the 1962 Sino-Indian war and the recent Galwan skirmish². The Sino-Indian adversarial relationship induced a thaw between USA and India, despite India's Soviet-leaning track record blazing since the cold war days.

Within this context, USA and India which are hell-bent on containing China and denying it access to the Indian Ocean among other things, have kicked off on a mission to roll back CPEC which they view as the main carriageway of Chinese global dominance. On the other hand, CPEC lies at the heart of China's BRI, with the future of Pakistan's economy relying heavily on it. It elevates Pakistan as the *Zipper of Pan-Eurasian integration* lying at the *convergence of civilizations*. It is thus a struggle for geopolitical prowess for China and a struggle for the future of Pakistan.

1 Allison, Graham. 2017. "The Thucydides Trap". *Foreign Policy*. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/09/the-thucydides-trap/>.

2 Duhalde, Marcelo, Dennis Wong, and Kaliz Lee. 2020. "India-China Border Clash Explained". *South China Morning Post*, 2020. <https://multimedia.scmp.com/infographics/news/world/article/3091480/China-India-border-dispute/index.html>.

In the geopolitical context, the US-led western world would prefer a status quo in which the US remains the sole superpower, followed closely by the UK and other European allies. This status clearly leaves no room for China or Russia at the center stage of global politics. The US and its allies thus want Pakistan to distance itself from China, roll back the CPEC, and deny China access to the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf. In the regional context, India also wants Pakistan to distance itself from China as its megalomaniac views consider China as a growing rival. Concurrently, India wants Pakistan to accept its regional hegemony, conform its foreign policies to larger Indian designs, as has already been done by Myanmar, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, give India free & guaranteed access to Central Asia and resolve the longstanding disputes (particularly Kashmir) on India's terms.

Consequent to the convergence of their interests, a hybrid mix of activities has been initiated by the Indo-US nexus which includes smearing of CPEC as *China's attempt to colonize Pakistan through a debt trap* and the *Chinese vision to establish a Naval base at Gwadar*. Sometimes the CPEC is objected to for *passing through disputed Kashmiri territory*; on other occasions, *Baloch sub-nationalism* is enticed to derail the project in Balochistan. Afghanistan is used to launch terrorist attacks in Pakistan especially along CPEC routes to tarnish its image and reduce its attractiveness to foreign investors and businesses. For a keen observer, the method behind miscreant activities in Gwadar or along the length of the coastal highway or attempts to blow up railway lines and gas pipelines is all too evident. Last but not least the ongoing power struggle in the middle-east between Saudi Arabia and Iran also adds to the already volatile mix and fuels its sectarian dimension.

Section III: Components of the Hybrid onslaught against Pakistan

In the immediate post-USSR and post-Afghan Jihad era, Pakistan no longer remained relevant to the prevailing geopolitical scene and got onto the wrong side of the powers that be, mostly due to its staunch China-leaning and its improving nuclear program. While its overt

nuclearization in 1998 had seemingly made its defense impregnable, the same phenomenon encouraged its adversaries to find out other solutions to fight Pakistan. The futility of India's *Operation Parakaram* in 2001 led to the birth of its *Cold Start Strategy*. Cold start however had its limitations and could not take off as desired and was subsequently checkmated through Pakistan's *Azm-e-Nau* series exercises. In the ensuing decades, Pakistan was subjected to a hybrid onslaught that sliced through every imaginable domain, ranging from the more benign diplomatic tools to outright kinetic actions. While Pakistan was initially caught off-guard and took some time in getting its act together, it successfully adapted to the changed scenario and is the only country to have survived through the war on terror, despite having been pushed to the brink on occasions. Few other countries which were once considered more stable and prosperous than Pakistan such as Iraq, Syria, and Libya, were not as fortunate. At this juncture, it is important that the hybrid threats that Pakistan faces be dissected to identify their components to find a workable solution or a timely and befitting response to each.

Diplomatic Domain

The catastrophe euphemistically named 9/11 provided India with a golden opportunity to project Pakistan as a *terrorism-sponsoring state* and to paint the *indigenous-Kashmiri-freedom-struggle* as a ruse and *foreign-aided-terrorism*. It went on a diplomatic offensive against Pakistan, with some success, as Pakistan already had its hands full with the war on terror. However, Pakistan was a much-needed ally of the US-led coalition at that time, firstly due to its proximity to Afghanistan and secondly due to the leverage it presumably had over the Afghan Taliban. It was thus possible for Pakistan to keep the world players interested in itself and to counter the nefarious Indian efforts towards tarnishing Pakistan.

Come 2016, and India was quick to blame Pakistan for alleged involvement in the controversial *Uri attack*, in which India, to its chagrin, lost 18 soldiers in an attack on an Indian Army Brigade Headquarters in Uri. Prime Minister Narinder Modi announced his aim to diplomatically isolate Pakistan on 26 September 2016 as follows:-

"We will leave no stone unturned to isolate Pakistan in the world."

- Narinder Modi³

Resultantly, India launched a diplomatic maneuver to isolate Pakistan from the international community by projecting Pakistan as a state sponsoring terrorism and putting the credibility and safety of Pakistan's nuclear assets under question.

"India wanted to isolate Pakistan on the international level and is making every effort to undermine the country in the world fora."

- Shah Mehmood Qureshi⁴

In the immediate aftermath of the Uri attack, India boycotted the 19th SAARC Summit scheduled in Islamabad in November 2016 which was soon cancelled as other countries also showed their inability to attend. India thereafter explored BIMSTEC as an alternate to SAARC.⁵ In September 2016, at the G20 Summit in China, India blatantly referred to Pakistan as 'one single nation spreading agents of terror in the region'.⁶ In April 2017, during the *Bangladeshi Prime Minister's visit to India*, India and Bangladesh condemned Pakistan for sponsoring terrorism and radicalism.⁷

In June 2017, during Indian Prime Minister Narinder Modi's visit to the USA, he persuaded the US government to sanction Syed Salahuddin, the leader of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist.⁸ During the same visit, Trump and Modi called on Pakistan to ensure that its territory is not used to launch terror attacks on

3 Keohane, David, and Farhan Bokhari. 2016. "India's Modi Threatens To 'Isolate Pakistan' After Kashmir Attack". *Financial Times*, 2016. <https://www.ft.com/content/bb7592de-82e3-11e6-8897-2359a58ac7a5>.

4 "India Wants to Isolate Pakistan Diplomatically, Says Qureshi". 2020. *Pakistantoday.com.pk*. <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2019/03/10/india-wants-to-isolate-pakistan-diplomatically-says-qureshi/>.

5 "Rajya Sabha TV-The Big Picture: BIMSTEC Vs. SAARC - INSIGHTSIAS". 2016. *INSIGHTSIAS*. https://www.insightsonindia.com/2019/06/11/rajya-sabha-tv-the-big-picture-bimstec-vs-saarc/#:~:text=SAARC%20is%20a%20purely%20regional,Commerce%2C%20Culture%20and%20Connectivity).

6 *New Delhi Times*. 2016. "PM Modi Hits Out Against Pakistan at G20 Summit", 2016. <https://www.newdelhitimes.com/pm-modi-hits-out-against-pakistan-at-g20-summit123/>.

7 Roche, Elizabeth. 2017. "India, Bangladesh Ink 22 Pacts, Modi Announces \$4.5-Bn Line of Credit to Dhaka". *Mint*. <https://www.livemint.com/Politics/kduouENTGMfwEmokftAqoN/Modi-announces-45-billion-line-of-credit-to-Bangladesh-Te.html>.

8 Siddiqi, Naveed. 2017. "Kashmiri Militant Leader Punished as Modi Visits US". *Dawn*, 2017. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1341914/kashmiri-militant-leader-punished-as-modi-visits-us>.

other countries.⁹ In September 2017, on Indian behest, the *BRICS' declaration* named militant groups allegedly based in Pakistan as a regional security concern and called for their patrons to be held to account.¹⁰

In January 2018, US President Donald Trump issued his infamous new year tweet blaming Pakistan for lying to the U.S. and facilitating the Afghan Taliban.

"The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies & deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools. They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!"

- Donald Trump¹¹

In July 2018, India used the 6th *Heart of Asia Conference* held in Amritsar, to pursue its agenda of isolating Pakistan, wherein top Indian and crony Afghan leadership ganged up to blame Pakistan for all terrorism in the region.¹²

In September 2020, India walked out of an *SCO Meeting* as a protest against Pakistan's map shown by Pakistan's National Security Advisor Moeed Yousuf, which showed Jammu and Kashmir as part of its territory.¹³

In November 2020, India handed over a dossier to the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (USA, France, Russia, Britain & China) which allegedly showed Pakistan's involvement with four militants, shot dead in Jammu. The militants were accused of being members of *Jaish-e-Mohammad*, who were

9 Dawn. 2017. "Trump, Modi Call on Pakistan to Stem Terrorist Attacks", 2017. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1341915>.

10 Dawn. 2017. "BRICS Name Militant Groups as Regional Security Concern", 2017. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1355705/brics-name-militant-groups-as-regional-security-concern?preview>.

11 Trump, Donald. 2018. "Twitter". *Twitter.com*. https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/947802588174577664?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwtterm%5E94702588174577664%7Ctwgr%5E%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.geo.tv%2Flatest%2F174943-everything-trump-has-ever-said-about-pakistan.

12 *Jahangir's World Times*. 2020. "The 6th Heart of Asia Conference & The Future of Pak-Afghan Relations", 2020. <http://jworldtimes.com/pakistan-affairs/the-6th-heart-of-asia-conference-the-future-of-pak-afghan-relations/>.

13 "India Walks Out of Meeting Over New Pakistan Map". 2020. *Aa.Com.Tr*. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/india-walks-out-of-meeting-over-new-pakistan-map/1974502>.

planning a major terrorist attack in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK).¹⁴ Again, in November 2020 during an *SCO Meeting*, Indian Vice President Venkaiah Naidu blamed Pakistan for using terrorism as a state policy.¹⁵

Economic Domain

Pakistan's economy is being subjected to a tight squeeze through economic sanctions, levied to force it into compliance. Foreign economic assistance is unabashedly being used as coercive leverage. Loans from international financial institutions such as the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been followed up by very strict conditions, leading to public dissatisfaction and social fissures.

US intentions here were that it wanted Pakistan to distance itself from China, roll back CPEC (and consequently Gwadar) thereby denying China access to the Indian Ocean, provide political and if need be military support against Iran, and assist America in winding up its Afghan imbroglio. The contents of the US Army field manual on Unconventional warfare give an insight into how the USA reflects upon the financial leverage it possesses over most countries.

“Like the economic activity, which all nation-states, human groups, and individuals respond to, ARSOF can use financial power as a weapon in times of conflict up to and including large-scale general war. Like the economic activity that it is related to, most financial power is unmanaged, routine, and peaceful. However, manipulation of U.S. financial strength can leverage the policies and cooperation of state governments. Financial incentives and disincentives can build and sustain international coalitions waging or supporting U.S. UW campaigns. As part of an interagency effort, the U.S. Treasury can recommend changes to U.S. policy that can provide such incentives to state governments

14 “India Tells UNSC Pakistan Behind Plot ‘To Wreak Major Havoc’ In Kashmir”. 2020. *Al Arabiya*. <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/world/2020/11/24/India-tells-UNSC-Pakistan-behind-plot-to-wreak-major-havoc-in-Kashmir>.

15 *Times of India*. 2020. “SCO: India Slams Pakistan for Terror, opts Out of BRI Endors. Read More At: http://Timesofindia.Indiatimes.Com/Articleshow/79497940.Cms?Utm_Source=Contentofinterest&Utm_Medium=Text&Utm_Campaign=Cppest”, 2020. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/sco-india-slams-pakistan-for-terror-opts-out-of-bri-endorsement/articleshow/79497940.cms>.

and others at the national strategic policy level. Participation in international financial organizations, such as the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), offers the U.S. diplomatic-financial venues to accomplish such coalitions.”

- US Army Special Operations Forces
Unconventional Warfare FM3-05.130¹⁶

Pakistan has been in the crosshairs of the *Financial Action Task Force (FATF)* and has already been *grey-listed* since June 2018. India, which is a co-chair of FATF and *Asia-Pacific Group (APG)* is maneuvering behind the scenes to get it *blacklisted*¹⁷, which of course will have damaging effects on its economy. Pakistan narrowly missed being backlisted in February 2020 owing to the support of China, Turkey, and Malaysia.

Military Domain

Pakistan and India have fought wars in 1948, 1965, 1971, and 1999 and their military machines remain poised against each other even now. Nine out of 11 Indian Corps are deployed along the Indo-Pak border; Pakistan in turn is obliged to reciprocate as any complacency will be disastrous.

Both adversaries are engaged in a tit-for-tat *arms race* that has cost their masses dearly. Finances best spent on social uplift are spent on advanced weaponry. Besides conventional weapons, the nuclear arsenal also has to be kept updated, further impinging on their finances. Pakistan's strategy being defensive in nature, it cannot be blamed for the arms race; India being the regional hegemon is the main driving force of this pernicious cycle.

During the preceding decade, India menacingly amassed its forces twice on the Indo-Pak border. Over a million soldiers of two nuclear-armed countries remained deployed, eyeball-to-eyeball to each other for over six months. In 2001, India undertook *Operation Parakaram*,

¹⁶ US Army. 2008. "Army Special Operations Forces - Unconventional Warfare."

¹⁷ Zafir, Saleh. 2020. "India Planning to Make Stronger Case at FATF To get Pakistan Blacklisted". *The News*, 2020. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/655340-india-planning-to-make-stronger-case-at-fatf-to-getpakistan-blacklisted>.

blaming Pakistan for the attack on its Parliament, and again amassed its forces in 2008 blaming Pakistan for the Mumbai attacks. Both those times, it chose not to look at the root cause of the problem i.e., its illegal occupation of Jammu & Kashmir and the indangerous independence struggle therein; India chose to blame Pakistan for its follies, skewing to get Pakistan labeled as a state sponsoring terrorism. It failed. These undue and abortive escalations have however costed millions to Pakistan's ailing economy.

Ceasefire violations and unabated *Indian shelling along the line of control* are other favorite Indian strong arm tactics that have costed the residents dearly. In 2020¹⁸ alone 2900 ceasefire violations were recorded in which 33 innocent Kashmiris were martyred while another 260 were injured. The youngest of the martyrs was a two years old child from Neelum valley and 11 were collectively killed when a mortar round landed in a marriage ceremony in Kotli, on 22 November 2020. On 18 December 2020, Indian troops even targeted the United Nations vehicle carrying two officers of the United Nations Military Observers Group for India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), in the Chirikot sector along the LoC.¹⁹ Pakistani forces are therefore forced to respond in kind.

In the aftermath of the *Uri attack*²⁰ of 16 September 2016, in which the Indian Army lost 18 lives, Indian authorities hastily propagated a make-believe story of undertaking a *surgical strike*²¹ inside Pakistani territory, in which they claimed to have killed up to 38 terrorists who were planning to undertake a terrorist operation inside India. While Indian officials were still tweaking the script of the loosely choreographed drama in a desperate bid to fix plot holes in the storyline, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) seized the initiative and took local & foreign journalists on a visit to the purported strike

18 Naqash, Tariq. 2021. "2020 Roundup: 33 Civilians Martyred, 260 Injured by Indian Shelling In AJK, Says Minister". Dawn, 2021. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1599059/2020-roundup-33-civilians-martyred-260-injured-by-indian-shelling-in-ajk-says-minister>.

19 Siddiqui, Naveed. 2017. "Indian Troops Target UN Vehicle from Across Loc in 'New Low'". Dawn, 2017. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1596462>.

20 Rashid, Taufiq, and Rahul Singh. 2016. "India's Fallen Heroes: The 18 Soldiers Who Lost Their Lives in Uri Attack". *Hindustan Times*, 2016. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-s-fallen-heroes-the-17-soldiers-who-lost-their-lives-in-uri-attack/story-vzn8pYHFNPkgm34M6ptg5I.html>.

21 Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. 2016. "Transcript of Joint Briefing by MEA And Mod (September 29, 2016)."

locations along the Line of Control to debunk the myth of Indian surgical strikes.²²

Serial	District	Martyred	Injured	Remarks
1	Kotli	9	75	• Martyred include 16 males and 17 females. • Injured include 161 males and 99 females.
2	Neelum	7	35	
3	Haveli	6	23	
4	Bhimber	5	52	
5	Poonch	4	44	
6	Jhelum	2	25	
7	Muzaffarabad	-	6	
Total		33	260	

Figure 12: Casualties in 2020 due to Indian shelling along LOC²³

Serial	District	Houses	Shops	Remarks
1	Kotli	86	2	• Other items include one Petrol Pump, 23 vehicles, 5 motorcycles, 4 rice milling machines, 3 cattle sheds, 9 mosques, and 192 cattle heads.
2	Neelum	201	14	
3	Haveli	17	-	
4	Bhimber	38	1	
5	Poonch	149	7	
6	Jhelum	96	16	
7	Muzaffarabad	8	-	
Total		595	40	

Figure 13: Properties damaged in 2020 due to Indian shelling along LOC²⁴

The events of February 2019 pushed the brinksmanship of both countries to new extremes. On 14 February 2019, a suicidal attack on a *Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)* convoy led to the death

22 *The Express Tribune*. 2016. “‘Surgical Strikes’: Journalists Flown to Loc to Debunk Indian Myth”, 2016. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1192133/surgical-strikes-journalists-flown-loc-debunk-indian-myth>.

23 Naqash, Tariq. 2021. “2020 Roundup: 33 Civilians Martyred, 260 Injured by Indian Shelling In AJK, Says Minister”. Dawn, 2021. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1599059/2020-roundup-33-civilians-martyred-260-injured-by-indian-shelling-in-ajk-says-minister>.

24 Naqash, Tariq. 2021. “2020 Roundup: 33 Civilians Martyred, 260 Injured by Indian Shelling In AJK, Says Minister”. Dawn, 2021. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1599059/2020-roundup-33-civilians-martyred-260-injured-by-indian-shelling-in-ajk-says-minister>.

of 78 CRPF soldiers, the highest death toll in decades.²⁵ As usual, instead of addressing the core reason for such attacks, i.e., the illegal occupation of Jammu & Kashmir, India was quick in pointing fingers at Pakistan. A few days later on 26 February 2019, India claimed to have launched a *non-military pre-emptive* airstrike using 20 Mirage 2000 aircraft, which ‘.....struck the biggest training camp of Jaish-e-Mohammad in Balakot’²⁶ and ‘.....killed 300 militants.’²⁷ Pakistani authorities exposed the hollowness of the claim before India could acclaim credit, as ISPR announced the incident almost immediately on its Twitter handle.

“Indian aircrafts intruded from Muzaffarabad sector. Facing timely and effective response from Pakistan Air Force released payload in haste while escaping which fell near Balakot. No casualties or damage.”

- DG ISPR, 26 February 2019²⁸

Pakistan responded in kind. On 27 February 2019, Pakistan Airforce (PAF) launched *Operation Swift Retort*, to display its capability and resolve. PAF engaged six targets inside Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir, shot down two IAF aircraft which were trying to follow the returning PAF aircraft and caught one of the pilots’ *Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman*.²⁹

In the heat of the battle, India accidentally shot down one of its MI-17 helicopters in Budgam also.³⁰ A battle of narratives ensued thereafter in which India tried to paint the event as its military victory,

25 “Kashmir Attack: Tracing the Path That Led to Pulwama”. 2019. *BBC News*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-47302467>.

26 “India Struck Biggest Jem Training Camp in Pak: Full Text of Govt Statement”. 2019. *Business-Standard.com*. https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/india-struck-biggest-jem-training-camp-in-pak-full-text-of-govt-statement-119022600337_1.html.

27 *The Economic Times*. 2019. “Indian Air Strike in Balakot Killed 300 Militants: Sources”, 2019. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/indian-air-strike-in-balakot-killed-300-militants-sources/articleshow/68165466.cms?from=mdr>.

28 *Dawn*. 2019. “Indian Aircraft Violate Loc, Scramble Back After PAF’s Timely Response: ISPR”. 2019. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1466038/indian-aircraft-violate-loc-scramble-back-after-pafs-timely-response-ispr>.

29 *DG ISPR Press Conference - 27 February 2019*. 2019. Video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EkGeXOiGhBU>.

30 Bhalla, Abhishek. 2019. “Budgam Mi-17 Crash: IAF Chief Admits Big Mistake, Says Our Own Missile Hit Chopper”. *India Today*, 2019. <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/budgam-mi-17-crash-iaf-chief-admits-big-mistake-1606217-2019-10-04>.

even granting gallantry awards to their pilot who owes his life to a timely rescue operation by Pakistan Army.

Informational Domain

For the most part of the preceding decades, India possessed a strong and effective media arm that effectively propagated the Indian version-cum-narrative to the international audience. Bollywood played an important role in showing India in the right light. With a sizeable tech-savvy younger generation, Indian influence over social media outlets also reached new levels. On the other hand, Pakistani media remained a simplistic, single-channel entity for most of its history and lacked its own English news channel till very late. Pakistan was thus shown in the wrong light internationally, right until the dawn of the war on terror. While Pakistan had realized the potential of a strong media muscle right from the Kargil war onwards, it was the coming of the War on Terror that catapulted its significance center-stage.

In the informational domain, India has tried to project Pakistan as a *terror-sponsoring state*, whose *nuclear weapons are always in danger of falling in the wrong hands*. Volumes of fake news are churned out against it on a daily basis, aimed at smearing its image, saturating the informational space with negative propaganda, spreading discontent in the masses, and fanning mistrust and apprehensions between the masses and the state institutions.

This infowar saw new peaks at the time of the ‘*Indian Surgical Strike*’ charade of September 2016 and the ‘*Balakot Strike-cum-Operation Swift Retort*’ period of February 2019. In the latter incident, Indian authorities even tried to sell the idea that IAF had downed a *Pakistani F-16*, however, the claim lacked material proof and was later exposed by U.S. defense officials, who verified that all Pakistan’s F-16s were accounted for.³¹ On another occasion, India blamed Pakistan for spearheading infowar against it in the context of the *Galwan Valley* clash also.³² Both sides battle to spread their version of the narrative internationally and to keep their own public onboard.

31 Seligman, Lara. 2019. “Did India Shoot Down a Pakistani Jet? U.S. Count Says No.”. *Foreign Policy*, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/04/did-india-shoot-down-a-pakistani-jet-u-s-count-says-no/>.

32 Krishnan, Ananth. 2020. “Pakistanis Behind ‘Chinese’ Info War on India-China Border

More recently, the Indian Army has raised an *Information Warfare Branch* as part of its General Headquarters, which is to be commanded by a Lieutenant General.³³ On the Pakistani side, the job is being handled by the ISPR.

In end-2020, the Brussels-based *EU Disinfo Lab* exposed Indian infowar methods in its report titled '*Indian Chronicles: Deep Dive into A 15-Year Operation Targeting the EU and UN to Serve Indian Interests*'³⁴. According to the report over 750 fake media houses set up in 116 countries worked 24/7 to weave a vast network of deception, while more than 550 domain names were registered under false names to carry out the operation directed and choreographed from New Delhi. To create an aura of credibility around their suspicious activities, the string-pullers resurrected more than 10 dysfunctional NGOs accredited with the UN, fake letterheads, and multiple identity thefts.³⁵ EU Disinfo Lab has described Indian information operations as follows:-

"Indian Chronicles resurrected dead media, dead think-tanks, and NGOs. It even resurrected dead people. The actors behind this operation hijacked the names of others and tried to impersonate regular media and press agencies such as the EU Observer, The Economist, and Voice of America. They used the letterhead of the European Parliament; registered websites under avatars with fake phone numbers; and provided fake addresses to the United Nations.

Indian Chronicles also organized supposedly multi-stakeholder events where – in essence – everyone speaking was tied to them. They misappropriated the picture of a former UK Government Minister and BBC Director on Facebook, registered the names of deceased persons to attend events five years after their death, and invented

Standoff". *The Hindu*, 2020. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/pakistanis-behind-chinese-info-war-on-india-china-border-standoff/article32255760.ece>.

33 Bhalla, Abhishek. 2019. "Defense Ministry Clears Information Warfare Branch for Army to Counter Fake News". *India Today*, 2019. <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/defence-ministry-clears-information-warfare-branch-army-counter-fake-news-1473624-2019-03-08>.

34 EU Disinfo Lab. 2020. "Indian Chronicles: Deep Dive into A 15-Year Operation Targeting the EU And UN To Serve Indian Interests". https://www.disinfo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Indian-chronicles_FULLREPORT.pdf.

35 Ahmed, Nasim. 2021. "India's Info War Against Pakistan - Weekly Cutting Edge". *Weekly Cutting Edge*. <https://weeklycuttingedge.com/indias-info-war-against-pakistan/>.

dozens of journalist identities. They used layers of fake media that would quote and republish one another. They used politicians who genuinely wanted to defend women or minority rights to ultimately serve geopolitical interests, and gave a platform to far-right politicians when their objectives converged.”

Cyber Domain

The growing mistrust between the USA and Pakistan in the midst of the war on terror led to cyberattacks on Pakistani institutions and important political and military figures. In March 2013, Edward Snowden revealed that Pakistan was one of the countries most surveilled by the U.S. National Security Agency.³⁶ In 2016, *Snowden papers* revealed that:

*“The United States hacked into targets in the Pakistan’s National Telecommunications Corporation (NTC) to spy on the country’s political and military leadership”.*³⁷

In April-May 2019, mobile phones of over two dozen Pakistani government officials, including defense and intelligence officials were hacked by Israeli firm NSO using a malware named *Pegasus*³⁸, although NSO later denied all allegations.

In November 2019, Indian government approved the establishment of the *Defense Cyber Agency*³⁹, while all of its three services had established their own *Cyber Emergency Response Teams (CERTs)*. In August 2020, a major cyberattack by Indian agencies was identified and reported by ISPR as follows:-

36 Qadeer, Abdul. 2020. “The Cyber Threat Facing Pakistan”. *TheDiplomat.com*. <https://thediplomat.com/2020/06/the-cyber-threat-facing-pakistan/>.

37 “US Hacked NTC To Spy on Pakistan Military, Political Leadership: Snowden Documents”. 2016. *Geo.Tv*. <https://www.geo.tv/latest/112040-US-hacked-NTC-to-spy-on-Pakistan-military-political-leadership-Snowden-documents>.

38 Mubashir, Mubashir Ali. 2019. “Israeli Spyware Used to Target Pakistani High Officials Through WhatsApp”. *Daily Times*, 2019. <https://dailytimes.com.pk/523810/israeli-spyware-used-to-target-pakistani-high-officials-through-whatsapp/>.

39 *The Times of India*. 2019. “Govt Approves Setting Up of Defense Cyber Agency Read More At: http://Timesofindia.Indiatimes.Com/Articleshow/72264836.Cms?Utm_Source=Contentofinterest&Utm_Medium=Text&Utm_Campaign=Cppest”, 2019. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/govt-approves-setting-up-of-defence-cyber-agency/articleshow/72264836.cms>.

“Pakistan’s Intelligence Agencies have identified a major cyber-attack by Indian Intelligence Agencies involving a range of cyber-crimes including deceitful fabrication by hacking personal mobiles and technical gadgets of government officials and military personnel. Various targets of Hostile Intelligence Agencies are being investigated.”

- No PR-146/2020-ISPR⁴⁰

In November 2021, the Secretary-General of the Chinese Cyberspace International Governance Research Center, Lu Chuanying, published a report in the *China Military Online*, stating that Indian hacking organizations had launched cyberattacks on other countries.⁴¹ Indian Facebook pages, YouTube channels, and other social media sites continuously churn out hate messages about Pakistan.

Few significant cyber-attacks on Pakistani websites/portals include the August 2021 cyberattack on the *Federal Board of Revenue (FBR)*’s portal in which hackers put the data acquired from the site on sale for \$ 30,000/- on a Russian website, a cyberattack on music website *Patari* in June 2021 which led to the data leakage on 257,000 users, ransomware attack on *K-Electric* website in September 2020 which led to the leakage of 8.5 GB data, cyberattack on *Meezan Bank* resulting in the leakage of data of 69,189 bank cards and cyberattack on Pakistani Banks in November 2018 effecting nearly 20,000 customers.⁴² Pakistan’s foreign minister Mr. Shaukat Tarin has stated in the National Assembly that the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is subjected to 71,000 cyber-attacks per month.⁴³

40 “Inter Services Public Relations Pakistan”. 2020. *Ispr.Gov.Pk*. <https://www.ispr.gov.pk/press-release-archive.php?cat=army&dt=2020-08-12>.

41 “India Launched Cyberattacks Against China, Pakistan: Report | The Express Tribune”. 2021. *The Express Tribune*. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2330871/india-launched-cyberattacks-against-china-pakistan-report>.

42 “Here’s A Recap of Major Recent Cyber Attacks in Pakistan”. 2021. *Propakistani*. <https://propakistani.pk/2021/08/23/heres-a-recap-of-major-recent-cyber-attacks-in-pakistan/>.

43 Zeb Khan, Mubarak. 2021. “71,000 Cyber Attacks Made on FBR Portals Every Month: Tarin”. *Dawn*, 2021. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1649393>.

Social Domain

Engineered social movements are a more recent phenomenon in which dissatisfied societal factions – both real and fictitious are galvanized against the state to cause large-scale disorder and chaos. While these movements present an innocent face to the larger audience, investigations often reveal hidden foreign hands and foreign funds supporting such activities, furthering their own nefarious designs.

In the Indo-Pak context, certain Baloch sub-nationalist groups have been identified to be playing in Indian hands, being directly supported by RAW, carrying out terrorist activities within Pakistan such as the attack on PC Hotel Gwadar, attack on Chinese Consulate in Karachi, and the more recent attack on Karachi Stock Exchange. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been openly speaking about extending support to Baloch sub-nationalists to help them stand against Pakistan.⁴⁴ Modi has already confessed to the linkages between the *Mukti Bahini* and RAW during his 2015 visit to Dhaka.⁴⁵ Indian Navy's ex-commander Kulbhushan Jadhav had admitted that:

*"My purpose was to hold meetings with the Baloch insurgents and carry out activities with their collaboration. These activities have been of criminal nature, leading to the killing of or maiming of Pakistani citizens I realize during this process that RAW is involved in activities related to the Baloch liberation movement within Pakistan and the region around it."*⁴⁶

Indian Defense Minister Manohar Parrikar has said on record that we can "*neutralize terrorists through terrorists only*"⁴⁷ giving away Indian inclination towards using terrorism as state policy. Similarly,

44 Roy Chaudhury, Dipanjan. 2016. "PM Modi Raises Balochistan, Blasts Pakistan in His Independence Day Speech". *The Economic Times*, 2016. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/pm-modi-raises-balochistan-blasts-pakistan-in-his-independence-day-speech/articleshow/53714625.cms?from=mdr>.

45 *India Today*. 2015. "PM Narendra Modi Accuses Pakistan of Creating Nuisance, Promoting Terror", 2015. <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/modi-in-dhaka-pakistan-terror-land-border-agreement-saarc-unsce-sheikh-hasina-256089-2015-06-07>.

46 Ahmed, Waqar. 2021. "Indian-Funded Terrorism in Balochistan". *The News*, 2021. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/770909-indian-funded-terrorism-in-balochistan>.

47 *The News*. 2015. "We Have to Bring Terrorists to Deal with Terrorists: Indian Defense Minister", 2015. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/12627-we-have-to-bring-terrorists-to-deal-with-terrorists-indian-defence-minister>.

the *Doval Doctrine* ascribed to the Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval is predicated on jingoism, hawkishness, and aggression. Doval has often been found thumping his chest about his undercover stay in Pakistan and has publicly made remarks about severing Balochistan:-

“Pakistan’s vulnerabilities are many times higher than us. Once they know that India has shifted its gear from defense mode to defensive-offense, they will find that it is unaffordable for them You may do one Mumbai, you may lose Balochistan.”⁴⁸

Indian involvement in Pakistan’s long-drawn war on terror has been well-known and was confessed to by Latifullah Mehsud, a close aide of Hakeemullah Mehsud:-

“The Indian and Afghan secret agencies both fanned terrorism in Pakistan These covert foreign agencies used TTP and other militant outfits as means for spreading terrorism inside the Pakistani territory.”⁴⁹

Similar confessions were later made in 2017 by Ehsanullah Ehsan, former-TTP spokesperson after his surrender:-

“Relations with NDS and RAW grew They supported TTP, extending financial assistance and they also gave targets, and for each attack (TTP) charged a price Their movement used to take place with the blessing of NDS and Afghan forces”.⁵⁰

Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) also nourishes on the grievances of tribal residents caught in the middle of the war on terror. Links between PTM and NDS & RAW have already been exposed by the Inter-Services Public Relations Department (ISPR) on more than one occasion.⁵¹

48 Syed, Abdul Rasool. 2019. “Doval Doctrine & Covert Operations”. *Daily Times*, 2019. <https://dailytimes.com.pk/366415/doval-doctrine-covert-operations/>.

49 “VIDEO: Key TTP Terrorist Confessed to Indian, Afghan Backing”. 2014. *Geo.Tv*. <https://www.geo.tv/latest/123951-VIDEO-Key-TTP-terrorist-confessed-Indian-Afghan-backing>.

50 Hassan, Syed Raza. 2017. “India, Afghanistan Gave Help to Pakistani Taliban, Says Group’s Ex-Spokesman”. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/article/pakistan-militants-idINKBN17T0EB>.

51 *Times of Islamabad*. 2019. “Pakistan Military DG ISPR Exposed PTM Links with RAW And NDS With Evidences”, 2019. <https://timesofislamabad.com/29-Apr-2019/pakistan-military-dg-ispr-exposed-ptm-links-with-raw-and-nds-with-evidences>.

DG ISPR's briefing of 28 April 2019 gave vivid details of funding of TTP by NDS and RAW.⁵²

Lawfare

India continuously attempts to leverage the international legal framework in its favor. It has resorted to lawfare more prominently in cases of the *Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir*, *water wars*, and *Kulbhushan Yadav*.

Financial Action Task Force (FATF)⁵³. FATF deals with both *Anti-Money Laundering (AML)* and *Combatting Financing of Terrorism (CFT)*. Pakistan was placed on the FATF *grey-list* for the second time in June 2018 and is being consistently asked to meet a huge list of AML and CFT requirements. Despite having met 26 of the 27 given requirements, FATF continues to keep Pakistan on the *grey-list*, something which the Indian government overtly claims credit for engineering.⁵⁴ As the FATF wish list continues to spawn more demands, Pakistan remains under the overt Indian threat of being relegated to the *blacklist*. India has been fervently pursuing this agenda by raising objections of sorts.

The Kulbhushan Yadav Case at International Court of Justice (ICJ). Indian Naval intelligence officer Kulbhushan Yadav had been caught in Balochistan, had accepted involvement in enticing Baloch sub-nationalists to secession, and has been awarded the death sentence by Pakistani courts. India took the case to the ICJ and turned it into a matter of granting counselor access rather than espionage. India tried to portray Yadav as an Indian businessman who had been abducted by Pakistani authorities from Iran, however, it has badly failed to garner international support for its ill-conceived drama.

Defaming & Derailing CPEC. CPEC is expected to be the harbinger of prosperity for Pakistan as it is poised to form the

52 "PTM Funding: The Role Of RAW-NDS, Wealthy FATA Diaspora In the Gulf & Hostile Agencies". 2019. *Global Village Space*. <https://www.globalvillagespace.com/ptm-funding-the-role-of-raw-nds-wealthy-fata-diaspora-in-the-gulf-hostile-agencies/>.

53 Jinnah Institute. 2019. "War to Lawfare: Spotlighting the India-Pakistan Conflict". Policy Brief. <https://criterion-quarterly.com/war-lawfare-spotlighting-india-pakistan-conflict/>.

54 *The Dawn*, 2021. US says 'recognises, supports' Pakistan's efforts to meet FATF requirements. [online] Available at: <<https://www.dawn.com/news/1636195>> [Accessed 22 November 2021].

backbone of regional trade, weaving together the future of the entire region. Indo-US nexus has been consistently trying to defame and derail CPEC, each for its own gains. US perceives that CPEC will enable China to dominate the Persian Gulf by establishing a Naval Base at Gwadar. India also sees CPEC as part of the greater “string of pearls” strategy and perceives it to be an encircling move around India. Both are thus hell-bent on derailing the project. Against this backdrop, they have applied tremendous international pressure on Pakistan to abandon the project and have reportedly resorted to low-level terrorist activities in Pakistan to keep the situation murky and unfavorable for CPEC’s progress. Attack on PC Gwadar, attack on the Chinese Consulate in Karachi, the capture of Kulbhushan Yadav in Mashkel, Balochistan are all links of a larger grand strategy aimed against CPEC.

Indian stance on the legal status of CPEC. India has tried to argue that CPEC is an illegal project as it flows through the *Union territories of Jammu & Kashmir, illegally occupied by Pakistan*.

Revoking of Article 370. Article 370 of the Indian constitution granted a special status to Indian Occupied Kashmir by allowing for its own flag, constitution, and independent legislation. In August 2019, India revoked the article thus stripping Kashmir of this special status. The revoking of article 370 brings with it the repealing of article 35A also. As a consequence, people from outside are now able to buy land in Kashmir, settle down, and have jobs, paving the way towards demographical and cultural changes in Kashmir. This act is against the instrument of accession India had signed with the Maharaja in 1947, against the UN resolutions and Indo-Pak bilateral agreements. It is illegal because India was supposed to take consent of the state government which has not happened. Since this step cancels the instrument of accession it further hyphenates India’s forceful occupation of Kashmir. Indian defense Minister Rajnath Singh’s statement that any future talks about Kashmir will be regarding Pakistani Administered Kashmir has further added fuel to the fire and has indicated the trajectory that India might take, including raising its claim on Gilgit Baltistan.

Electronic Media Prong

India has a very well-developed media prong and its Bollywood is second in size only to Hollywood, in fact, it surpasses Hollywood in the number of films produced per year. Anti-Pakistan sentiment sells well in the Indian public domain and that is what the electronic media cashes on, unfortunately in turn it also aggravates the rhetoric. Bollywood continues to churn out anti-Pakistan movies e.g., *Uri-The Surgical Strike* (2019), *Raazi* (2018), *Baby* (2015), *Agent Vinod* (2012), *1971* (2007), *LOC Kargil* (2003), *Gadar* (2001), *Border* (1997), *Diljale* (1996), etc. Its jingoistic media regularly propagates false narratives such as the *fabricated downing of Pakistan's F-16*⁵⁵ in 2019, while some of its television talk shows and their hosts, Arnab Goswami⁵⁶ and the likes, maintain a permanently bellicose attitude towards Pakistan, in turn affecting Indian public opinion.

False Flag Operations

India has increasingly and alarmingly ventured in the direction of conjuring false flag operations which at times have brought both nuclear nations to the brink of war. The *Samjotha Express Bombing*⁵⁷ of 2007 is a case in point in which India was quick to blame Pakistan for the bombings, whereas later details revealed that the bombings were the works of Hindu nationalist extremists and included the names of *Sunil Joshi, Swami Aseemanand, Lieutenant Colonel Shrikant Prohit* and *Abhinav Bharat* group, among others. Other incidents bearing the markings of false flag operations include the *Malegaon Mosque* (2006), *Mecca Mosque Bombings in Hyderabad Deccan* (2007), and *Ahmedabad Bombings* (2008), all of which were initially blamed on Pakistan, but were later traced back to Hindu extremists.

55 Seligman, Lara. 2019. "Did India Shoot Down a Pakistani Jet? U.S. Count Says No."

Foreign Policy, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/04/did-india-shoot-down-a-pakistani-jet-u-s-count-says-no/>.

56 Ali Shah, Murtaza. 2020. "Anti-Pakistan Hate Show: Arnab Goswami's Channel Fined Rs4.3M In UK". *The News*, 2020. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/762992-anti-pakistan-hate-show-arnab-goswami-s-channel-fined-rs4-3m-in-uk>.

57 Ahsan, Sofi. 2019. "Samjhauta Express Blast Case Explained: Who Are the Accused? What Did NIA Chargesheet Say?". *The Indian Express*. <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-samjhauta-express-blast-verdict-today-who-are-the-accused-what-did-the-nia-chargesheet-say-5620175/>.

Using Sports as Leverage

India has on numerous occasions tried to use its clout in sports for political gains. Despite having a bilateral agreement/MoU, India has refused to play with Pakistan when it has chosen to, while Pakistani players have also been stopped from playing in the Indian Premier League (IPL). A particularly pointed episode occurred in 2010 once Pakistani players were invited to take part in the bidding process, but later none were selected in the teams.⁵⁸

Post-Pulwama incident, the Indian cricket team wore military camouflage caps to a match against Australia on 8 March 2019.⁵⁹ In turn, Pakistan asked ICC to act against BCCI as it was politicizing the sport. ICC however framed the cap issue as a 'fund-raising drive' and 'tribute to the armed forces' by the Indian Cricket team. The ICC's position negated its own code of conduct which states that:

"Players and team officials shall not be permitted to wear, display or otherwise convey messages through arm bands or other items affixed to clothing or equipment ('Personal Messages') unless approved in advance by both the player and team officials, Board, and the ICC Cricket Operations Department".⁶⁰

- The News

It also negated its own precedents, e.g., it had earlier banned English player Moeen Ali⁶⁰ from wearing wristbands with 'Save Gaza' and 'Free Palestine' written on them and had also reprimanded South African player Imran Tahir⁶¹ for wearing T-shirts with *Junaid Jamshaid's* picture on them. India's growing influence on ICC has become more evident over the years.

58 Yousuf, Raja. 2012. "IPL: A Story of Continuing Insults for Pakistan". *Tribune*, 2012. <https://tribune.com.pk/article/10205/ipl-a-story-of-continuing-insults-for-pakistan>.

59 "Pakistan Wants ICC Action Against India for Wearing Army Caps". 2019. *Aljazeera.com* <https://www.aljazeera.com/sports/2019/3/9/pakistan-wants-icc-action-against-india-for-wearing-army-caps>.

60 "ICC Take Action Over Ali's Wristbands". 2014. *Cricket.Com.Au*. <https://www.cricket.com.au/news/icc-investigate-england-allrounder-moeen-ali-for-gaza-wristbands/> 2014-07-29.

61 *Dawn*. 2021. "ICC Reprimands Imran Tahir for Displaying Junaid Jamshed Picture", 2021. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1310668>.

In 2019, India did not issue visas to Pakistani shooters⁶² to deny them the opportunity to participate in ISSF Shooting World Cup. International Olympic Committee termed this a violation of the Olympics Charter and threatened India with isolation in the future. The IOC statement read:

*“As a result, the IOC Executive Board also decided to suspend all discussions with the Indian NOC and government regarding the potential applications for hosting future sports and Olympic-related events in India”.*⁶³

- Reuters

Ban on Artists

In the last few years, Pakistani artists have been banned from working in India on several occasions, the recent ones being in 2016 and then again in 2019. In 2016⁶⁴, after the Uri incident, ‘*Indian Motion Pictures Producers Association (IMPPA)*’ imposed a ban on Pakistani actors, singers, and technicians till ‘normalcy returned’, with some waivers given to the films which were already under production. In February 2019⁶⁵, after the Pulwama incident, the *All-India Cine Workers Association (AICWA)* announced a *total ban* on Pakistani artists working in the Indian film industry. In August 2019, *Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE)* banned⁶⁶ Indian singer *Mika Singh* from all kinds of performances and playback singing in India, as retribution for performing in a private

62 Shekhar Luthra, Chander. 2019. “India Denies Visa for Pakistan Shooters for ISSF Shooting World Cup”. *DNA India*. <https://www.dnaindia.com/sports/report-india-denies-visa-for-pakistan-shooters-for-issf-shooting-world-cup-2721537>.

63 “Olympics-IOC Urges India Isolation After Pakistani Athletes Denied Visas”. 2019. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/article/olympics-india-pakistan-idUKL3N20H033>.

64 Safi, Michael. 2016. “Indian Films Banned, Pakistani Actors Ejected – How the Kashmir Crisis Is Hitting Bollywood”. *The Guardian*, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/09/indian-films-banned-pakistani-actors-ejected-how-the-kashmir-crisis-is-hitting-bollywood>.

65 *Outlook India - The Fully Loaded Magazine*. 2019. “All Indian Cine Workers Association Announces Complete Ban on Pakistani Artists, Actors Amid Pulwama Attack”, 2019. <https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/entertainment-news-all-indian-cine-workers-association-announces-complete-ban-on-pakistani-artists-actors-amid-pulwama-attack/325699>.

66 *Dawn*. 2019. “India Bans Mika Singh for Performing in Pakistan”, 2019. <https://images.dawn.com/news/1183502/india-bans-mika-singh-for-performing-in-pakistan>.

function in Karachi. Even cyberspace has been subjected to Indian highhandedness, wherein in April 2020, Indian artists were warned against collaborating with Pakistani artists online, when *Rahat Fateh Ali Khan*, *Harshdeep Kaur*, and *Vijay Arora* participated in a digital concert.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ *Dawn*. 2020. "Indian Artists Warned Against Online Collaborations with Pakistanis", 2020. <https://images.dawn.com/news/1185053>.

Chapter 5

Responding To Hybrid War

Cognizance of the geopolitical and regional linkages is a prerequisite for articulating a response to hybrid threats. A broad spectrum of hybrid threats merits a broad-based response, each hybrid strand needs to be tackled separately i.e., a diplomatic offensive will have to be answered in the diplomatic domain, while social threats will have to be answered in the social domain. Some threats can be effectively addressed in the short term, while others will require long-term engagement.

Section I: Geostrategic Level

Choosing the Right Side in the Ongoing Geopolitical Contest

In the anarchic global arena, there are no permanent friends and foes, only national interests remain supreme. In the Sino-U.S. power struggle, Pakistan needs to choose the right side and that side is neither the American nor the Chinese side. Instead, Pakistan needs to choose its own side i.e., it has to keep its national interests above everything else and must side with the player with whom its interests align. It had been the U.S. in yesteryears, it is China today. That said, Pakistan can ill-afford to completely let go of the U.S., owing to its geopolitical clout and its economic prowess.

Diplomatic Response

In the diplomatic domain, Pakistan needs to present a coherent and unified front to the external world. Its foreign policy must accrue maximum benefits from the geopolitical contestation at play. As argued, for the interim period, it can ill-afford to rub any of the two contestants i.e., China or the USA, the wrong way. It may rather try to play the role of a bridge between both the contestants, as it had

successfully done in the 1970s.¹ Where this seems untenable, it may join the bloc favoring its national interests, while keeping doors open for rapprochement with the other. Banking on its cultural diversity, it must present its softer image to the international community. Additionally, it must use its geostrategic location as leverage, by contributing in the Afghan Peace Process, thereby keeping the world powers interested in it. UN, OIC, SAARC, and other available international forums be proactively used to raise the *Kashmir issue*. Pakistan can also bridge gaps within the Muslim world by leveraging its good relations with KSA and Iran.

Indian human rights violations in general and those in IIOJK in particular, must be brought in front of the whole world. Pakistan must continue to make public Indian atrocities through dossiers, as was done in September 2021², and by submitting such dossiers to the UN, as was done in November 2020.³

Section II: National Level

Strategizing against Hybrid Warfare – Adopting a Whole of the Government Approach

Fighting hybrid wars cannot be relegated to the militaries alone. Since the hybrid onslaught occurs in every domain, be it diplomatic, social, or economic, the response has to be given in all these domains also. This implies that a *Whole of the Government* approach is to be adopted for a coherent and effective response. Under the overall umbrella of the *National Security Council*, each government department needs to identify and study threats within its domain and hone its skills to respond. Inter-ministerial coordination is also critical to keep the response coherent, timely, accurate and owned by all. A coordinated response must be open to critique, should have

1 Burr, William. 2002. "Kissinger's Secret Trip to China". *Nsarchive2.Gwu.Edu*. <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB66/>.

2 "Pakistan Dossier Details Indian War Crimes, Rights Violations in Kashmir". 2021. *TRT World*. <https://www.trtworld.com/asia/pakistan-dossier-details-indian-war-crimes-rights-violations-in-kashmir-49904>.

3 "Pakistan Gives UN A Dossier on India, New Delhi Dubs It 'Lies'". 2020. *Aljazeera.Com*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/25/pakistan-gives-un-a-dossier-on-india-new-delhi-dubs-it-lies>.

endorsement as an integer of the *National Security Policy*, and must be reviewed every 2-3 years.

Self-Assessment to identify and protect Vulnerabilities

Government must undertake a periodic review to identify and address national vulnerabilities. The civil and military hierarchy must sit together to share thoughts, exchange notes, and strategize. The scope of traditional threat assessment methods must be spread to include non-conventional domains also. It must also be appreciated that a government with a stable political and economic standing will remain less vulnerable to hybrid threats.

Incorporating Civil Society

Freedom of thought and self-expression and the social media and the capabilities of media groups and think tanks often surpass that of governmental institutions. Civil society must, therefore, be propped, incorporated, and mobilized at the national level to add an additional layer of national defense. Building up a pool of experts on hybrid warfare who can directly interact with the masses through electronic and social media will help in preempting and neutralizing hybrid threats in their infancy.

Implementing the National Action Plan (NAP)⁴

The Army Public School attack of 16 December 2014 shook the nation and garnered a consensus to uproot terrorism for good, through concerted national efforts. While the *National Internal Security Policy 2014* laid out broad policy guidelines for state institutions, an Action Plan was necessitated for quantifiable and time-bound actions with results. The 20 Points *National Action Plan* (NAP) for countering terrorism and extremism was quickly chalked out, however, its implementation was not as prompt as demanded by the then prevailing disorder. True implementation of its 20 points will go a long way in suppressing and eradicating the scourge of terrorism from Pakistan.

4 “National Action Plan, 2014”. 2014. *Nacta.Gov.Pk*. <https://nacta.gov.pk/nap-2014/>.

Expediting the completion of CPEC

As discussed earlier, the hitherto prime target of the hybrid threats is CPEC. This flagship venture, being a gamechanger and harbinger of prosperity for Pakistan, must be accorded the highest priority and implemented in the shortest possible time. Pakistan has taken quantum steps to ensure the security of CPEC which includes raising two dedicated *Security Divisions* and capacity enhancement in many other hi-tech fields. The security apparatus must ensure that no untoward incidents occur which impede or thwart the progress achieved on the corridor.

Carving out a National Narrative

A good job has already been done in creating a national narrative in the shape of *Paigham-e-Pakistan*⁵, which is a fatwa signed by over 1800 ulema outrightly denouncing terrorism, extremism, and sectarianism. However, despite having been around for three years it has not been disseminated well and has fallen short of making its mark to date. The scope of the narrative may be broadened, allowing it to subsume other walks of social life. More widespread dissemination, supplemented by media debates and activities on national days will help in spreading awareness and creating faith in the national narrative, thereby striking at the very roots of the enemy's nefarious designs.

Economic Domain

Pakistan's economic plight makes it susceptible to different external pressures including economic intimidation, and its purported benefactors hold sizeable influence over its policies and actions. Foremost, Pakistan needs to put its ailing economy on the right track to get itself out of the debt trap and its unhealthy cycle, and to save itself from the leverage that the lender states and organizations enjoy over it. It needs to turn around its economy fast, to be able to withstand economic blackmail. *Broadening the tax net* and *addressing the trade deficit* are crucial steps in this direction.

5 "Paigham e Pakistan". 2018. *Paighamepakistan.com*. <http://www.paighamepakistan.com/>.

Informational Domain

Infowar tends to transcend boundaries, both battlespace & wartime, and finds itself at play 24/7, 365 days a year. It aims at subverting the opponent's population by delegitimizing the government, defaming the state organs, and sowing discord, while simultaneously feeding patriotic themes to its own populace for keeping them charged, aware, and onboard. A well deliberated informational prong must be launched by the government, aimed at showing the country in the right light. Rich history, culture, diversity, religious tolerance, growing economy, growing youth bulge, and tourism potential are a few of the themes holding promise. Indian nefarious designs must be continuously exposed taking cue from the recent exposition by the *EU Disinfo Lab*.⁶ Pakistan also needs to diversify its media industry by opening more English channels for its voice to be heard internationally far and wide. Regulatory authorities must regulate the authenticity of information showcased on mass media to combat its misuse by adversaries.

Cyber Domain

Pakistan's reliance on imported hardware, software, and services (due to the absence of an indigenous cyber industry per se) makes it susceptible to cyberattacks and data breaches through embedded malware, backdoors, and chipsets. Pakistan needs to enhance its cyber security capabilities to protect its computer-centric sectors. Government officials, especially members of LEAs must stop using foreign social media as it remains prone to hacking and data leakage thus increasing national vulnerabilities. An indigenous alternate must be quickly developed and made available. The *National Cyber Security Policy*⁷ needs to be implemented in letter and spirit to secure national services and infrastructure from cyberattacks. A combined *civil-military cyber command force* working under the National Security Council is required to synergize the national effort.

6 *The News*. 2020. "India's 15-Year Information Warfare to Isolate Pakistan Debunked by EU DisinfoLab", 2020. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/756547-eu-disinfoLab-debunks-indias-operation-of-over-750-fake-websites-to-take-down-pakistan>.

7 "National Cyber Security Policy 2021". 2021. *Moitt.gov.pk*. <https://moitt.gov.pk/SiteImage/Misc/files/National%20Cyber%20Security%20Policy%202021%20Final.pdf>.

Regulation of Pakistani cyberspace and maintenance of computer and mobile user records is necessary to implement the writ of the government. Capacity building of LEAs is required to enable them to deal with cyber warfare. Cyber-crime wings at FIA and NACTA need to be strengthened. Public campaigns are required to spread awareness. Cyberwarfare must also be introduced as a subject in college education.

Countering Fake News & Rumors

The proliferation of mass media and information avenues have also increased the flow of fake news. The deleterious effects of fake news are so severe that they necessitate state interventions in the form of task forces and institutions to counter the fake news e.g., USA has created the *Global Engagement Centre*⁸ while the European Union has created the *Disinformation Review*⁹. Pakistan must also establish a task force or institute to quickly identify and address fake news in real-time. Websites must be penalized for both creating and sharing fake news, case in point being the *German Network Enforcement Act*¹⁰. Government must encourage critical thinking in schools and PEMRA must monitor news being disseminated to the masses. It should however stay short of imposing a censorship regime as that is suffocating and counter-productive. Drivers behind the news need to be critically analyzed and items detrimental to national security should be expunged so that media offices do not play in the hands of the enemy inadvertently or by design. Professional and research-based investigative journalism must be promoted. Social media must also be swarmed with the correct perspective so that the truth remains accessible to the masses.

Social Domain

Social vulnerabilities once exploited by nefarious forces lead to catastrophic consequences. Social discontentment must therefore

8 "Global Engagement Center - United States Department of State". 2021. *United States Department of State*. <https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-public-diplomacy-and-public-affairs/global-engagement-center/>.

9 2021. <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/>.

10 Böttcher, Lorenz. 2021. "» Network Enforcement Act (Netzdurchsetzungsgesetz, Netzdg) German Law Archive". *Germanlawarchive.Iuscomp.Org*. <https://germanlawarchive0.iuscomp.org/?p=1245>.

always be addressed as priority. Baloch sub-nationalism, religious extremism, and aversion in our tribal areas are a few of the issues faced by Pakistan. Hostile agencies keep exploiting these fault-lines to keep Pakistan off-balance. Government needs to engage with these social forces, address their demands, and discourage & dissuade them from anti-state activities. Foreign support to anti-state elements must be severed. Sub-nationalist elements be taken on board, PTM be made irrelevant, and high-paced development projects be undertaken in these areas to address the population's genuine concerns.

Lawfare Domain

Pakistan's Law Ministry must develop a strong legal arm which can tackle all threats in the legal domain and advise the government accordingly. Pakistan must adopt a well-informed legal stance on each of its international issues and then forcefully pursue the same through international legal bodies for maintaining an upper hand on its adversaries. These may include the Kashmir issue, Indian misappropriation of the Indus Basin Water Treaty etc. The enemy must be pleaded out and denied a legal recourse. In-house, it must expedite legislation against destructive attacks on national assets such as pipelines and grid stations and create a mechanism to ensure their foolproof security. Security engagements may be examined and vetted by a legal team beforehand so as to avoid mis-steps. Diplomats and operational commanders must also be imparted requisite legal education to be able to comply with legal requirements.

Educating and Preparing the Nation for the Hybrid Onslaught

COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa once called every Pakistani '*a soldier of Operation Radd-ul-Fassad*'¹¹. This analogy holds more truer today than ever before, as responsibility of defending our country (or any country for that matter) against foreign aggressions has now to be shared by both the soldier and the civilian, in their respective fields. For this purpose, it is imperative that the general public is especially

11 *Daily Times*, 2017. Every Pakistani a soldier in Radd-ul-Fasaad: COAS. [online] Available at: <<https://dailytimes.com.pk/15432/every-pakistani-a-soldier-in-radd-ul-fasaad-coas/>> [Accessed 12 January 2021].

made aware of the threats being faced, so that they do not unknowingly bat for the wrong team. This requires broad-based regular debates on national security affairs in the parliament, in print and electronic media, and in educational institutes. Public participation will induce a sense of ownership in the masses. The public, acting as sensors, should be able to identify threats to the federation and must help LEAs in identifying and fighting such threats.

Establishing a Hybrid War Centre of Excellence

Such a center of excellence, set up under the umbrella of the *National Security Division* and associated with the *National Defense University*, where a mix of government and defense experts can interact and conceptualize the threats and hone our capabilities of response, will go a long way in strengthening our national security apparatus. Inter-agency/inter-departmental brainstorming sessions will enable the forum to put forth a more cogent and doable course of action to the leadership.

Capacity Building of Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs)

Most of our LEAs presently lack the capacity to engage with hybrid threats. They are therefore left out of the battle while the threat transits straight to the center of gravity. Police reforms and capacity building of civil armed forces through professional training, provision of modern equipment, merit-based recruitment & promotions, and depoliticization will enable these forces to play a more potent role towards enhancing national security.

Addressing the Root Causes of Discord

Hybrid threats are often the consequences and not the root causes e.g., to exploit a sectarian issue, a reasonable sectarian fissure must first exist. It therefore, flows that tackling hybrid threats alone will serve nothing more than cutting the head of the hydra as a new one will grow in its place. The deeper causes of discord and societal fissures will have to be clearly understood and addressed to deny exploitable opportunities to the adversary. Tactical brilliance will achieve nothing in the absence of an overarching strategy. Security challenges cannot be resolved entirely through administrative actions

or counter-narratives unless the deeper, structural socioeconomic drivers are also worked at.

Section III: Military Level

Enhancing Intelligence Capabilities

The design behind each hybrid move needs to be unearthed well in time, to minimize its damages. To this end, an elaborate, hi-tech and well-developed intelligence apparatus which can forewarn against impending threats and can preempt them, is an essential requirement. Collection and collation of information and its conversion into real-time actionable intelligence must remain the hallmark of hybrid warfare. ISI, MI and IB must work hand in hand and advise government about the threats it faces, and specify the required response. Both ISI and MI Directorate must establish a cell each within their folds specifically dedicated to counter hybrid threats.

Military Domain

In the military context Pakistan must keep its forces ready and arrayed to deter any aggressive designs. Its nuclear policy must continue to augment the deterrent. Tit-for-tat responses, as displayed in February 2019 at the time of the Balakot incident will be essential to discourage Indians from trying to define a new normal or to impose any future misadventure. Ceasefire violations along the LOC must be retaliated in time and in kind, while at the same time their details must be vigorously shared with the international community in real-time. Stabilization operations such as Radd-ul-Fassad and the ongoing operations in Balochistan must be expedited and driven to their logical conclusion.

Hybrid Forces

Hybrid threats warrant structural changes in forces both at the *individual* and *collective* level. At the individual level, a hybrid soldier will need to be more educated and aware of his surroundings. Geopolitical settings will play a role in defining his mindset. He will be

able to bombard the adversary with mixed, at times false but crippling info in real-time through electronic and social media, aimed at defeating him mentally, even before the first bullet is fired. He will be expected to see through such tactics of the enemy. The hybrid soldier will be expected to gain intel, fight, destroy the enemy, rebuild and restore, while simultaneously reaching out to the civilians caught in the crossfire and helping them in coping with the war consequences. He will be expected to be as proficient with hi-tech computerized weapon systems, as he is with his gun.

Organizationally, armed forces must be equipped with a wider range of capabilities so as to be able to respond to both conventional threats, as from our Eastern border, and unconventional threats, as from terrorism, sub-nationalistic undercurrents, and other internal security challenges. Readiness for both ends of the warfare spectrum will merit innovative training and equipping methodologies. Formations will need to be restructured into smaller, diverse, specialized teams from their present status of larger monolithic, uni-purpose entities.

Maintaining Comprehensive Deterrence

A broad-based comprehensive deterrence regime is essentially required to keep the enemy at bay. The adversary will seek to carve out space for limited engagements staying short of the nuclear threshold. The nuclear threshold must therefore, be kept ambiguous, while deterrence through denial and appropriate punishment must remain instilled to keep the enemy's confidence level in doldrums.

Adaptations required in Military Culture

Battlefields of the yesteryears demanded strict order in the large-sized armed forces. Military culture of the time catered for the same, embodied in parades, salutes and discipline. Modern-day battlefield asks more for intellect and initiative than obedience and order from the junior levels. Military culture needs to adapt accordingly.

Ensuring Force Protection

Hybrid wars are characterized by an absence of identifiable fronts, flanks and rear areas, a conglomerate of combatant groups with different motivations, and the need for the armed forces to establish persistent presence in population centers. In the new paradigm, the enemy would often seek nothing more than to inflict a steady trickle of casualties on the LEAs in the place of their choice, resultantly causing a large and complex force protection problem. Mission-oriented force protection will thus be required for both conserving the force and fulfillment of the mission.

Ensuring Population Protection

Military machinery may be tasked to perform law enforcement duties, as is already the case in parts of ex-FATA, GB and Balochistan. In such cases, security actions for protecting the population from intimidation or harm by terrorists will be essential. A degree of control over the population must also be exercised through checking of identity, movement control, de-weaponization, jirgas and policing activities.

Management of the Western Zone

Few players of the hybrid mix live astride Pakistan's western border, in Afghanistan and Iran, strike at will, and then slip across the border. To avert this, Pakistan must continue with its plans to fence the western border. Required forts must be constructed to dominate the fence and enhance its obstruction value for stopping infiltrators. Capacity building of Frontier Corps must enable it to guard the frontiers thereby allowing de-induction of Army from these areas. Operationalization of formal crossing points on Pak-Afghan and Pak-Iran borders will promote trade, and discourage illegal movement of persons, human trafficking and narcotics. The merger of ex-FATA into settled districts must be undertaken at a faster pace.

Conclusion

As societies evolved throughout human history, so did contemporary warfare. It underwent a morphosis through its five generations and has undergone yet another mutation lately, taking the form of hybrid warfare. The term though new, the concept is not. Traces of hybrid onslaughts can be traced back to as far back as the Peloponnesian wars wherein internal fronts were created to compliment the external attack. With the current geopolitical contestation at play, Pakistan is caught in the eye of the storm and is increasingly facing hybrid attacks from its enemies. While it had been subjected to the hybrid war during 1971 also, the methods have been further refined over time. Today's hybrid onslaught cuts through all domains of the human experience including diplomatic, informational and economic domains.

Understandably, hybrid threats merit hybrid responses. As the threats cut through all domains, so must the response. A whole-of-the-government-approach is therefore fundamental in fighting hybrid. The government must strategize at the highest level employing the National Security Council, tasking each ministry to identify the threats in its domain and devise responses to them accordingly. A broad-based well-articulated and coherent response will be able to successfully take the country out of this hybrid quagmire. Capacity building of LEAs including Police, Civil Armed Forces and Armed Forces of Pakistan will be an essential prerequisite to this end. It must also be appreciated that a government with a stable political and economic standing and popular support will remain less vulnerable to hybrid threats, and will be able to resist disinformation, interference, and blackmail with unstinted resolve.

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Appendix - 1

20 POINTS OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN¹

1. Implementation of death sentence of those convicted in cases of terrorism.
2. Special trial courts under the supervision of the Army. The duration of these courts would be two years.
3. Militant outfits and armed gangs will not be allowed to operate in the country.
4. NACTA, the anti-terrorism institution will be strengthened.
5. Strict action against the literature, newspapers, and magazines promoting hatred, extremism, sectarianism, and intolerance.
6. Choking financing for terrorist and terrorist organizations.
7. Ensuring against re-emergence of proscribed organizations.
8. Establishing and deploying a dedicated counter-terrorism force.
9. Taking effective steps against religious persecution.
10. Registration and regulation of religious seminaries.
11. Ban the glorification of terrorists and terrorist organizations through print and electronic media.
12. Administrative and development reforms in FATA with an immediate focus on repatriation of IDPs.
13. Communication network of terrorists will be dismantled completely.

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14. Measures against abuse of internet and social media for terrorism.
15. Zero tolerance for militancy in Punjab.
16. Ongoing operation in Karachi will be taken to its logical end.
17. Balochistan government to be fully empowered for political reconciliation with complete ownership by all stakeholders.
18. Dealing firmly with sectarian terrorists.
19. Formulation of a comprehensive policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees, beginning with registration of all refugees.
20. Revamping and reforming the criminal justice system.